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MAIN STREET

planning & design guidelines

*This volume was donated to
the University of Toronto by
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Consultants Co. Ltd.*

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MAIN STREET

planning & design guidelines

prepared by: Project Planning Branch
Ministry of Housing

for: Community Renewal Branch
Ministry of Housing



Ministry of
Housing

Ontario

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Preface

The municipal response to the Main Street Program has been very positive. However, discussions with various municipalities have shown the need for a set of guidelines to assist interested communities in planning and designing appropriate improvements to their Main Streets. As a result, the Community Renewal Branch of the Ministry of Housing requested the Project Planning Branch of the same Ministry to develop a handbook to suit that purpose.

This handbook sets out planning and design guidelines for Main Street revitalization, focussing on the improvements to public spaces and structures that a community can undertake within the framework of the Main Street Program. The guidelines have been developed with the specific needs and characteristics of Ontario communities in mind. The handbook is directed toward municipal officials and members of business improvement associations who are already involved, or will soon be involved, in the Main Street process.

The essential purpose of this handbook is to provide *practical* information on what can be done to improve downtowns. To this end it includes several key sections:

- One that addresses the need for and an approach to the development of an overall improvements plan for Main Street. Examples of six different Main Street plans for a variety of community sizes and layouts are provided.
- A detailed list of items which may be considered by any community, such as street furniture or tree-planting. Specific design considerations and an estimate of costs are included.
- A list of other resources, in addition to the Main Street Program, of which a community may make use.

It must be emphasized that this handbook is not to be a substitute for planning by each municipality and business improvement association. Rather, it is to provide a community with direction - a set of guidelines - for preparing the plan and design most appropriate to each unique and individual community.

Any questions regarding Main Street should be directed to:

The Director
Community Renewal Branch
Ministry of Housing
60 Bloor Street West, 8th Floor
Toronto, Ontario.
(416) 965-2826



1. introduction

1.0 Introduction

Main Street today is getting ready to experience a true renaissance in Ontario, despite the fact that this backbone of the smaller urban centre has been challenged by the car and the suburban shopping centre. In some instances, downtowns have already lost the battle. Stores have closed; vacancy rates are high; retail sales have plummeted; buildings are in disrepair. Some downtowns have a seedy "has-been" image in the minds of residents.

In other areas Main Street is making a comeback. Businessmen, politicians and residents have gotten together either to prevent decline before it occurs or to rejuvenate already depressed core areas. Main Streets have been repaved; sidewalks repaired; parkettes and shopper rest areas created; trees planted and storefronts given a facelift. These efforts have been rewarded in the majority of cases with new businesses locating on Main Street, a return of shoppers to the core area, increased retail sales and creation of an atmosphere of well-being and confidence in the downtown. This represents a return to the traditional role of Main Street as a centre that offers goods and services, as well as a place for people to meet and talk with one another.

Why Bother?

Some people think the benefits to be derived from up-grading Main Street are obvious, but others remain justifiably skeptical about the net gains from such investment in their town.

Main Street is often only one among many alternative locations a resident has to choose from for shopping, personal business and social contact with other members of his/her community. The shopping mall on the outskirts of town or facilities in larger nearby communities has drawn business away from Main Street.

The suburban shopping centre is often built on cheaper land outside the core area, on a major highway. Consequently it is accessible to a wider market, and is able to provide extensive parking and a completely climate-controlled environment. Shopping centre merchants operate under a single management with common advertising campaigns, uniform store hours and coordinated merchandising policies which are usually contained in the terms of their leases.

Traditional Main Street has not been able to compete effectively for new development with the shopping centre. Land-holdings are frequently divided among many small owners. As a result, the assembly of these small holdings into a large single parcel for a sizable department store has been viewed as difficult and costly. Major anchor stores, usually a food or department store, have often chosen the less costly route -- a suburban centre location, instead of downtown.

As Main Street retail stores have become outmoded, some individual owners have modernized their premises. The results have sometimes been unfortunate -- the physical changes were not in keeping with the character of the original facades and the individual efforts were not coordinated to produce a unified effect or theme along Main Street. Without an overall plan, little or no investment was made on Main Street itself to make it more attractive or appealing to clientele drawn to the one-stop convenience of the shopping centre. Sidewalks were not repaired. Street furniture was not provided.

As recent experience also shows, improvement and reinvestment in Main Street can be promoted as an alternative shopping and community centre if it capitalizes on its strengths and uniqueness.

Each Main Street, of course, has its own individual identity which can and should be exploited, using a river front location or heritage properties, for example. Many small town downtowns also share some common opportunities to compete with the suburban plaza:

distinctiveness: Most downtowns have a distinctive architectural style and character which relates to the town's history. Main Street is usually a readily identifiable compact district which makes it a natural focal point for members of the community and for outsiders. This contrasts with the suburban shopping centre which is physically separated from town, used only for shopping and is indistinguishable physically from other centres in other communities.

infrastructure: Main Street has already installed water and sewer services. More efficient use of these existing services makes more economic sense, in times of limited money, than the extension or construction of new infrastructure to serve peripheral development.

existing building stock: Most Main Streets are relatively densely developed with contiguous two or three storey buildings. Often the second and third floors are under-utilized or not occupied at all. More effective use could be made of this space for office and residential use, thereby providing a wider variety of services within a relatively small area in contrast to the sprawling shopping centre.

under-utilized space: In spite of the higher densities found on Main Street than in suburban locations, many downtowns contain serviced land that is vacant or poorly utilized. Such land in the core area offers excellent potential for infill development or redevelopment.

energy conservation: As the cost of gasoline rises, people may be more likely to seek shopping and business services which are ac-



Figure 1. Main Street before revitalization



Figure 2. Main Street renewed

cessible on foot. Main Street offered such "one-stop" convenience in the past with its compactness and proximity to residential neighbourhoods. In addition, as the operating costs of heating and cooling systems rise, Main Street may be able to offer merchants less expensive space as the climate-controlled mall becomes costly to operate.

transportation: Main Street can be more readily served by a public transportation system – distances are shorter and the surrounding population is more densely housed.

Rehabilitation of and reinvestment in Main Street, particularly exploitation of its unique character, can have a number of benefits for the community:

new construction: Revitalization of Main Street by the present community can encourage new private investment in downtown through the construction of new retail space and rehabilitation or expansion of existing businesses.

increased employment: Stimulation of existing business and the opening of new stores and offices creates new employment opportunities for town residents.

increased retail sales: Up-grading of Main Street will attract more people into downtown and should result in increased retail sales activity – providing a direct return for private investment.

increased municipal revenue: Stimulation of new construction in the core will produce increased municipal tax revenue. On the opposite side of the ledger sheet, more intensive use of existing municipal services and facilities should result in less municipal expenditure for new services.

spin-off development: A revitalized Main Street should make adjacent neighbourhoods more attractive for both new construction and private rehabilitation of older residential buildings.

civic pride: An attractive, vibrant downtown will produce a sense of well-being and pride in the community.

The Handbook

The Ministry of Housing recognizes these benefits and is committed to a policy of conserving and revitalizing small town downtowns. It has established the Main Street Revitalization Program to provide the necessary funding for smaller communities (under 30,000 population) to carry out such improvements. The Program itself is outlined opposite.

Main Street Revitalization Program

The Main Street Revitalization Program is designed to help small Ontario communities with populations of 30,000 or less improve and upgrade their downtown areas using the Business Improvement Area (BIA) concept as a starting point.

(BIA is a device whereby merchants and business people can designate and tax themselves for improvements to street-scapes and related facilities. Section 361, the Municipal Act).

Since smaller towns often lack the capability to generate the front-end funding necessary for initiating improvement projects under the BIA approach, the provincial government will provide low-interest loans of up to \$150,000 to help the community improve and beautify municipally-owned lands and buildings in eligible areas.

The objectives of the Main Street Revitalization Program are:

- 1. To encourage and support downtown improvement projects by municipalities and business improvement areas in communities with populations below 30,000.*
- 2. To promote co-ordination and joint planning of comprehensive downtown improvement projects by the municipality, business groups, and the community-at-large.*
- 3. To demonstrate support for viable and attractive downtown areas in Ontario's smaller communities.*

Eligibility criteria:

To qualify for assistance, a municipality must have:

- (i) a maximum population of 30,000 as of the date of formal application;*
- (ii) an approved Official Plan;*
- (iii) a property maintenance and occupancy standards bylaw;*
- (iv) municipal council commitment and public support for the revitalization of the downtown;*
- (v) an active business improvement area under section 361 of the Municipal Act, and a downtown project proposal under section 361 of the Municipal Act;*
- (vi) demonstrated financial and administrative resources;*
- (vii) demonstrated the proposed project is in accordance with provincial policies.*

Figure 3. Main Street Revitalization Program

Provincial Funding:

Front-end funding will be provided to implement physical improvement and parking projects in accordance with business improvement area plans for the downtown, an approach that permits implementation of a comprehensive project which requires financing over a maximum 10-year period without placing a major financial burden upon the business community.

Eligible Costs:

- Improvement and beautification of municipally-owned lands, buildings and structures in an eligible business improvement area beyond such improvement and beautification as is provided at the expense of the municipality at large, but not for promotional, marketing or administrative costs.
- Assistance for the provision of parking within the downtown area.

General Conditions:

- The maximum provincial funding to an eligible municipality is \$150,000. No more than two-thirds of these funds can be used for parking purposes.
- Provincial financial assistance will be available to only one central business district per municipality.
- All terms and conditions of the funding will be incorporated in an agreement between the Minister of Housing and the municipality.

Repayment:

- The total provincial recovery would be 110 per cent of the provincial funding over a maximum 10-year period, thereby permitting a business improvement area to earmark a portion of its approved annual budget for the repayment of provincial funds.

Example:

Annual Business Improvement Area budget \$40,000:	
• Administration*	\$2,000
• Maintenance costs for street furniture*	\$3,000
• Promotions*	\$10,000
• Marketing Plan*	\$5,000
• Repayment of provincial loan (street furniture acquisition, lighting, parking improvements, etc.)	\$20,000
	\$40,000

*Not eligible for provincial funding.

In reviewing applications, decisions will be based on local need, project viability, the degree of municipal council commitment and local response, timing of implementation and conformity with provincial policies.

When applying for funding under the Main Street Revitalization Program a municipality must include:

- (i) A copy of the council resolution requesting provincial funding under section 361 of the Municipal Act;
- (ii) A business improvement area plan comprised of:
 - a) a list of the proposed improvements and activities
 - b) the anticipated impact which the improvements will have on the downtown area
 - c) an itemized cost estimate of the proposed improvements
 - d) timing for the completion of the proposed improvements
 - e) method of financing the proposed improvements including the repayment schedule
 - f) an administrative arrangement for the implementation of the plan
- (iii) Supporting material to comply with the municipal eligibility criteria.

The provincial approval of the application may be subject to section 64 Of the Ontario Municipal Board Act.

Municipal applications will be reviewed on a first come, first served basis subject to the availability of provincial funds. The Main Street Revitalization Program has a total provincial budget of \$5 million until March 31, 1981.

For more information contact:

Community Renewal Branch
Ministry of Housing
60 Bloor St. West, 8th Floor,
Toronto, Ontario
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(416) 965-2826

A stylized graphic on a solid blue background. On the left side, there is a white street lamp with a curved arm and a single light globe. Several white lines, representing power or data cables, originate from the lamp's base and extend diagonally across the frame towards the bottom right. The lines are grouped together, with some lines being thicker than others.

2. planning for main street

2.0 Planning for Main Street

2.1 Introduction

When communities are about to embark on a program of Main Street revitalization, the first question that is frequently asked is: *where do we start?*

2.1.1 Design Plan

A good place to begin is with the preparation of a design plan. Revitalization of Main Street will comprise a number of individual improvements. These require an overall design plan which illustrates what specific improvements are proposed, where they will be located, how they will be related to one another and, generally, when they will be carried out (phasing).

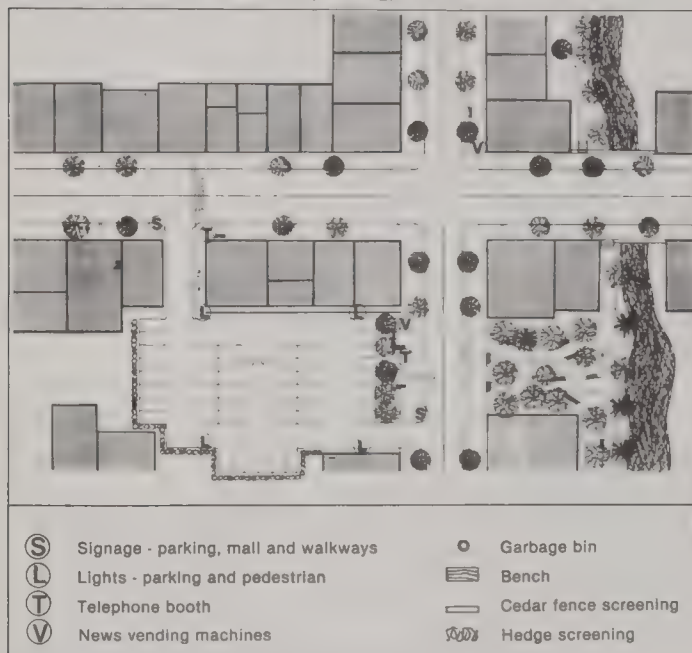


Figure 4. Design Plan, an example

2.1.2 Work Program

This design plan should be accompanied by a work program, which outlines precisely how the community will carry out its improvements. A work program normally contains a detailed schedule for individual works, itemized costs and names of personnel or municipal departments which will undertake the work. Phasing of the improvements over several years is also an important part of the work program.

2.1.3 Purpose of the Plan and Work Program

A design plan and work program will provide the community with a picture of what Main Street will look like in the future and with detailed guidelines to implement the proposed improvements.

Preparation of a plan and work program involves a lot of common sense. First of all, a plan enables a community to visualize in full all the improvements which are proposed. These works can then be coordinated with one another and with other planned town programs. Most of us, whether we live in a large city or small town, have observed at one time or another streets being torn up again and again -- once for sewer repairs, once for installation of hydro wires and once again for telephone cables. With careful planning, such inconvenience to residents and wasteful duplication of works may be avoided. Certain projects and/or areas of the downtown can be selected to receive first priority.

Secondly, a plan plays a major role in establishing common design principles for individual improvements, as well as guidelines for incorporating the improvements into their physical setting. Uniform design, colours and materials for street furniture, for example, are an important factor in presenting Main Street as a coherent shopping district and as a focal point for the community. The selected design, colours and materials should blend into or complement existing buildings and the total setting.

Thirdly, if all the proposed improvements are agreed upon and set out before hand, implementation of Main Street improvements should go ahead in an orderly and efficient manner. For instance, the total number of benches and their cost would be known, and could be ordered all at one time, rather than individually (and money might even be saved by ordering in this way).

Finally, the type and location of individual improvements can be coordinated with one another. This will avoid duplications and/or omissions. For example, one well-located parkette may be more effective and better used, than two less suitable ones.

2.1.4 Who Prepares the Plan and Work Program

The plan and work program can be prepared by members of the Business Improvement Area in conjunction with the municipality and its staff. Alternatively, the community may want to hire a planning and design consultant to assist them. The guidelines set out here have been prepared to assist both a municipality which wants to proceed on its own and one which hires a consultant. In any event, the information and advice contained here should help a community to determine what improvements it would like to see, to communicate that knowledge to others and to assess progress along the way.

Direct community consultation should be a part of the planning process. The opinions and knowledge of those people who use Main Street every day can make a valuable contribution to planning the type of improvements which are required on Main Street. Their views can be obtained in a number of different ways, by means of shopper surveys, community opinion surveys, public meetings and even conversation.

In addition to the views of Main Street users, local organizations can also be of assistance, not only for suggestions and guidance (e.g., the Chamber of Commerce), but also for on-going expertise. For instance, the local horticultural society may assist in the identification of appropriate plants and in the maintenance of strategic garden displays. The main point to remember is that Main Street revitalization benefits the entire community, not just downtown merchants, and as many people as possible should be involved from the beginning.

2.2 Planning for Main Street

Planning for Main Street does not begin and end with the plan and the work program. Planning is a continuing activity which the community engages in, and the plan and program are only a part of that process. Planning really begins when the community decides that something should be done about Main Street and it continues throughout the actual construction of Main Street improvements (usually a three to five year period), so that the results can be assessed and necessary changes and adjustments made to the plan.

Each municipality has its own unique character, as well as special problems. And, as a result, there are difficulties in generalizing on an approach to revitalize Main Streets across the Province. Nevertheless, the following items are ones each town should at least consider, and adopt or reject where necessary, as the town establishes its own Main Street revitalization planning program:

- define the downtown improvement area
- identify potential and problems

- develop goals
- develop specific objectives
- list all potential improvement actions
- prepare a final concept plan
- prepare work program
- set up capital budget
- establish local policies and controls
- identify on-going maintenance responsibilities
- action and evaluation

Each of these items are explained in more detail below.

2.2.1 Define the Improvement Area

In most communities the Main Street study area will correspond to the boundaries of the Business Improvement Area (BIA). If your community does not have a defined BIA already or if changes are being considered, the discussion, below, of factors to be taken into account should prove helpful.*

A number of issues need to be considered when BIA boundaries are drawn. All property owners within the BIA will be charged a special levy to pay for downtown improvements. Therefore, if the BIA encompasses too large an area, improvements may have to be spread thinly throughout the downtown to benefit all owners. The full impact of the improvements may be lost. On the other hand, if too small an area is designated, sufficient revenue may not be collected to carry out the proposed improvements. The relative success or failure of various improvements will depend on how well merchants and other businessmen believe they are benefiting from them. This may affect the long term willingness of taxpayers to fund improvements. As a result, the BIA requires careful definition to include those properties which truly form a part of Main Street and which will benefit from the program.

In addition to identifying the number of properties which will be contained within the BIA, the physical form and function of Main Street should be considered. To determine suitable physical and functional boundaries, the best place to start is usually with the traditional commercial core.

In most small urban centres, municipal buildings form the heart or focus of the core. Surrounding the municipal building or adjacent to it is the traditional central shopping district. This traditional core can be identified by an examination of the buildings contained in it. The common building features to look for are: age, character, architectural style, scale and materials. Once this traditional core is determined, an extension might be considered – to include a

*Note: For a municipality to be eligible for funding under the Main Street Revitalization Program, a BIA must be established. See details the Main Street Revitalization Program in Chapter 1.

building or group of buildings important to the functioning of Main Street, such as newer stores, library, office block or housing which has been converted into shops or offices.

The activities of people using downtown are also a vital factor in defining the BIA. A block of newer shops may form an intrinsic part of the shopping district and, if normal shopping or personal business trips to the core include visits to these as well, they should probably be included. Vacant lots (with potential for parking or new construction) or a unique feature (a heritage building, riverfront or tourist attraction) may also form a logical part of the proposed BIA.

This approach for establishing BIA boundaries works like constructing a pyramid from building blocks, starting with a foundation (the traditional core), adding to it in such a way that all parts reinforce one another, and come together in the end to produce a readily identifiable place.

Buildings are one of the key features of Main Street, and changes in their character and use can mark the edge of the downtown. The edges, however, may also be defined by other physical features or barriers: a major roadway separating the core from a residential neighbourhood; vacant, underdeveloped land; or a river. These often form useful, readily identifiable boundaries for the BIA.

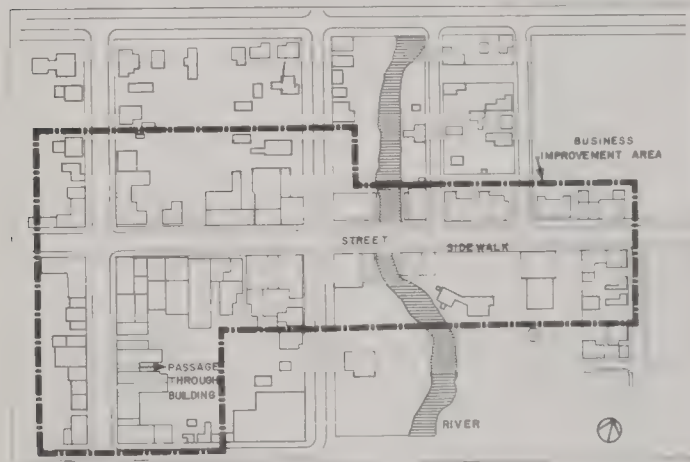


Figure 5. A typical base map

Different municipalities will naturally have different downtown configurations. One may stretch the length of Main Street (linear); another may have two major intersecting streets (cross-street); yet another may have two streets running parallel to one another (double-linear). BIA boundaries should reflect these individual differences.

To assist with improvement area definition, a base map of the area under consideration should be prepared. Base mapping normally includes information on property boundaries, building locations, parking areas, roads and sidewalks. Usually this mapping is already available from the municipal clerk or public works department.

2.2.2 Identify Potential and Problems

This is the most important step in getting to know and understand Main Street as it is today and what its potential is for the future. Every downtown is unique in some way – this uniqueness forms a large part of its potential.

Main Street may be physically unique with:

- heritage or architecturally unusual buildings
- special features, such as a civic square or a port facility
- tourist attractions, like an old mill or craft studios
- environmental features, such as a waterfront, trees, a river



Figure 6. Unique Feature: The Petrolia Public Library

On the other hand, Main Street may have an individuality which is derived from its closeness to regional or provincial attractions, such as beaches or provincial parks.

Some towns also have special events which help to give the community its particular character, including activities like an ethnic festival (Fergus Highland Games), a fall fair or summer theatre (Lindsay)

The unique or special features of every community will not necessarily have been identified or exploited yet. In those cases, the preparation of a plan for Main Street will provide the occasion for a community to assess its untapped potential, as well as to improve upon existing resources.

Not every community can be a tourist attraction, though, and the potential for improvement or revitalization may well lie, in many cases, in the enhancement of the existing services that Main Street provides to local and regional residents. Therefore, the principal functions of the downtown should be understood at the outset – so that improvements can be selected which are both practical and economically viable, as well as visually pleasing. If there are no major tourist attractions and facilities, for example, the community should not expect to draw on that market. The community should determine what its specific Main Street functions may be:

- a local convenience* shopping district for residents
- a tourist centre
- an agricultural supply centre
- a regional shopping and business centre

An assessment of Main Street's economic health is another important aspect of understanding how the downtown functions and where some of its major problems lie. An economic assessment will provide a cornerstone for planning, so that effort can be directed toward specific sectors which are in decline, toward enhancing a fairly stable area or toward any other identified problems. Another aspect of economic analysis which is seldom touched on is the use of information collected before improvements are carried out as a basis against which to measure the success or failure of various improvements in the core area.

An economic assessment normally includes the following information and analysis:

1. *amount of floor space by type of use.* (eg., retail-convenience or department store, personal service, institutional, office, residential, vacant, etc.). This basic data will provide an understanding of what activities are carried on in the downtown, whether there is a preponderance of certain types of stores or

*supplies, such as bread, milk and sundry goods, but not major department store items

uses, and where unused potential may exist; for instance, if there are no furniture stores or if there is substantial vacant space above ground level.

2. *annual retail sales per square meter.* This should provide evidence of the relative health of Main Street business, as well as indicate geographical areas or sectors where business is not doing well.

3. *vacancy rates and turnover.* A vacancy rate is the percentage of all stores or businesses which are vacant over the period of a year. A factor above three percent may indicate that an area is not doing well economically. Similarly, if there is a high turnover of retail or office space, this may be an indicator of likely vacancies in the future.

4. *employment.* A community should determine just how many jobs are provided downtown. This is often an insight into the economic importance of Main Street to a community. Furthermore, it will provide a basis on which to estimate how many new jobs may be created if new development occurs or existing businesses expand.

5. *taxable assessment.* Main Street is a major source of revenue in a municipality. New development or expansion of existing businesses should provide additional revenue for a municipality; vacancies mean lost assessment.

The identification of both potential and problems would not be complete without an inventory of the physical characteristics of Main Street. These include:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| • unique features | • shelters |
| • municipal buildings | • parking |
| • roadways | • lighting |
| • sidewalks | • signs |
| • pedestrian walkways | • green spaces |
| • street furniture | • utilities |
| • vacant/under-utilized spaces | |

An inventory of physical characteristics should consider problems with existing physical features (including whether they are in a poor state of repair) and potential (how they can be improved). In general, the use of the space, building or feature; its condition; its location and/or distribution; and design qualities should be considered here. In addition, input from shoppers and other people who use Main Street every day would be useful at this point. Chapter 4 provides in-depth guidelines for each of the physical features listed above: how to determine potential and evaluate problems; a range of solutions; design considerations; approximate costs; and likely benefits.

2.2.3 Develop Goals

Once the potential for Main Street and its current problems have been identified, long term goals can be established. These goals should express the ultimate ambitions a community has for its downtown; for example, to become a distinctive, attractive shopping district which provides a full range of services to local residents.

Goals provide the direction for improving Main Street. They are normally expressed broadly enough so that they can "pass the test of time"; that is, the goals will be able to remain in effect for a long period without becoming obsolete.

Goals should, nevertheless, reflect the particular needs of an individual community. For example, many communities may have one goal in common: "to strengthen the role and function of downtown", but one town may also have as a goal: "to develop the town as a major tourist centre". Another town may not have similar opportunities for tourism development and so its goal might be: "to enhance Main Street's district shopping function".

Goals should encompass all actions a community would like to undertake downtown and should not be directed only to the Main Street Program which provides funding solely for improvements to public spaces and buildings. Goals could also encompass promotional and organizational activities of the BIA, and/or a coordinated facelift of storefronts along Main Street.

EXAMPLE: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

GOAL

Improve Main Street for Shoppers

OBJECTIVES

- *improve pedestrian facilities and flow on sidewalks*
- *provide off-street pedestrian walkways*
- *build shelters for pedestrians from sun, wind, rain and snow*
- *create rest-areas for shoppers*

GOAL

Improve Tourist Attractions and Amenities

OBJECTIVES

- *connect waterfront to Main Street*
- *improve off-street parking facilities for buses*
- *build an information kiosk for Main Street*

2.2.4 Develop Specific Objectives

Once broad-brush goals are established for the BIA, specific objectives can be identified. Objectives are the interim targets to be achieved on the way to accomplishing the overall goals, such as improving pedestrian circulation and comfort on Main Street by widening sidewalks, providing benches and more suitable lighting.

This handbook is directed toward the fulfillment of specific objectives related to the Main Street Revitalization Program. These will likely form only a portion of all the objectives to be established in any one community. For example, Main Street program objectives may include the development of a pedestrian walkway system. Other objectives may extend to the creation of a farmer's market or a theme for downtown.

EXAMPLE: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND IMPROVEMENTS

GOAL

Improve Main Street for Shoppers

OBJECTIVE

Improve pedestrian facilities and flow on sidewalks

POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENTS

- *widen sidewalks to provide space for street furniture and an unobstructed pathway*
- *repave sidewalk with decorative materials*
- *remove parking meters*
- *provide benches, litter containers and planters*
- *provide pedestrian lighting*
- *create street-corner parkettes*

2.2.5 Prepare List of Possible Actions

The number and variety of improvements which can be made on Main Street is endless. Imagination and creativity have a major part to play in developing both interesting and practical ideas. In order to identify those works which are feasible, the community should examine as many potential improvements as possible.

One of the more satisfactory ways to do this is to set out a list of all possible improvements under each of the objectives the community has developed. Some improvements will be mentioned under more than one objective.

Community input would be valuable during this phase to suggest improvements and methods of implementing various proposed works.

Once the full range of possible Main Street improvements has been developed, alternative concept plans should be prepared that incorporate the proposed work items. The plans should reveal how the various improvements would fit together and should visually provide a way of testing their feasibility. Detail is not important at this stage and effort should be concentrated on preparing several overall concepts or schemes for Main Street, rather than working out the details of a particular street corner parkette.

The number of alternative concept plans should be kept to a minimum. Three alternatives should give the community sufficient information to consider, providing that the concepts are substantially different from one another.

2.2.6 Prepare a Final Concept Plan

The alternative plans should be evaluated and the most suitable plan, or a composite plan (one containing elements from all three) selected.

The following criteria should be considered an important part of plan selection:

- **Suitability:** How well does the plan fit the objectives and goals established at the outset of the process; will it solve some of the community's current problems and will it utilize available potential?
- **Cost:** How much will the improvements cost; how will they be funded and will sufficient monies be available when required?
- **Feasibility:** Can the improvements all be carried out within the next three to five years*, and are there any major impediments to the undertaking (eg., property ownership)?

Once the most appropriate plan has been selected, a final concept plan can be prepared. The final plan would include detailed working drawings for actual improvements; that is, the layout, materials and services required for specific items like a street corner parkette or a pedestrian walkway. Chapter 3 provides both an approach to and samples of such plans.

2.2.7 Prepare Work Program

Once Main Street improvements have been decided upon and a final plan drawn, the work program should be developed. A work program comprises three main elements: timing or phasing of works, cost and identification of who will do the work.

*A short time-frame for this first plan should be seriously considered. The results will be visible sooner and the financial commitment less burdensome.

Phasing of improvements should take into account:

- other planned municipal works or budgetary priorities
- functional relationship of the improvements to one another

If the community is planning to dig up the Main Street roadway during the plan period, any related improvements, such as sidewalk widening, repaving or burying utility wires, should be coordinated with this municipal project. Similarly, if a street corner parkette is planned, the entire parkette should be constructed at one time -- not in bits and pieces.

Some projects should probably be initiated before others to achieve the most beneficial results. If Main Street revitalization is the first major venture for a community into downtown improvements, the results of the first project normally will set the tone for the way future works and expenditures will be viewed by the community.

This will be a very important consideration.

A number of different strategies are possible, for example:

- undertake a pilot project on Main Street -- one which will immediately engage the interest of the community at large and, at the same time, one which will make a significant and readily visible improvement to downtown
- undertake a number of small projects throughout downtown -- ones which will distribute the benefits
- overlap a number of projects -- so that continuity is maintained and interest sustained

Funding will determine to a large extent the amount of work to be carried out in the first years. Experience shows that most communities have limited funds for improvements in the initial years. However, once the beneficial effects are felt (eg., increased retail sales), financial resources may become more readily available, and more ambitious and costly projects can be started, such as sidewalk repaving.

Implementation of the proposed improvements is a very important aspect of the work program. Two principal considerations are municipal priorities and project coordination. First of all, the municipality will be responsible for carrying out the improvements in most instances. Current budgetary and staffing priorities as well as constraints will have to be evaluated to determine when the relevant departments will be able to begin on Main Street. Secondly, a coordinator for the improvement program will have to be found. Experience in other communities has shown that the results are best and that works run smoothest when one person is delegated the responsibility for coordinating Main Street improvements. That person may or may not be on municipal staff. However, where the municipality is playing a major role in Main Street revitalization, a staff person may be most appropriate.

2.2.8 Capital Budget and Local Policy

Once the work program has been prepared, funding sources have to be determined and a capital budget prepared. First of all, the community should determine which improvements can be financed under the Main Street Program and which cannot (See Chapter 1). In the latter case other capital sources will have to be identified; for example, town revenues or other regular government programs. Chapter 5 lists a number of current provincial programs which may be relevant to Main Street.

In addition to financing, municipal council will want to initiate and adopt the necessary by-laws to support the proposed improvements, including a sign control by-law or a property maintenance and occupancy standards by-law. Necessary revisions may also be made to the official plan, indicating the area covered by the BIA and policies supporting its improvement and redevelopment.

2.2.9 Maintenance Responsibilities

Maintenance of the Main Street improvements, whether it means watering plants and trees or snow removal, is a very important issue.

Consequently, before the improvements are actually implemented, it is necessary that the responsibility for maintenance be determined – whether it is the municipality, the BIA or a variety of persons or groups – and that responsibility assigned.

2.2.10 Action and Evaluation

Once initial improvement projects have been completed and in use for a short period, the community should carry out an evaluation of the project impacts. An evaluation is basically a review of a project's performance to determine whether or not it has lived up to expectations. Experience is most often the best teacher and it may be found that a particular project – a street corner parkette – has been successful or unsuccessful in unexpected ways.

An evaluation should cover the following areas:

- use and abuse – by whom, when, how often
- visual appearance – compatibility with surrounding environment
- durability of materials
- maintenance problems
- cost – construction and maintenance

The information obtained from such an assessment can be used in two ways. First of all, changes can be made in the project under review to make it more successful. Secondly, changes can be made to other proposed improvements to ensure they will better meet community needs.

An abstract graphic design featuring a solid blue background. On the left side, there is a white graphic element consisting of several thin, parallel lines that fan out from a point, resembling a stylized sail or a fan. A single, thicker white line runs diagonally from the bottom left towards the center. In the upper right quadrant, the text "3. the concept plan" is written in a white, sans-serif font, enclosed within a white rectangular box with a slightly distressed or torn-edge appearance.

3. the concept plan

3.0 The Concept Plan

As mentioned in the preceding chapter, the actual plan for Main Street will include relatively detailed drawings of proposed improvements. The layout and organization of improvements and/or new features are key characteristics of such a plan, as are specifications for the materials and services required for specific components, such as a street corner parkette or a pedestrian walkway.

The integration of these various components and improvements into an overall urban design suitable to the unique historic, architectural and economic characteristics of an individual community should be the over-riding objective for each plan. For such a plan to be both effective and workable, though, it is essential that it suit the community's budget for Main Street improvements. Otherwise, there is a danger that it will only be a "pretty picture", instead of a plan that can be implemented.

3.1 What Should Be Included

It is really not possible to list every component of a plan, since each community will have different needs and objectives.

However, a number of basic elements that may be incorporated into most plans follow. These individual components are discussed in detail in Chapter 4, but are set out here in order to explain the sample concept plans in this chapter:

- Circulation systems: vehicular and pedestrian
- Parking
- Street furniture: planters, benches, litter containers, lighting, etc.
- Landscaping and tree planting
- Open spaces
- Municipal buildings

3.2 Preparation of the Plan

In order to prepare the most workable plan possible, it is recommended that professional assistance* be utilized in the development of the concept plan for Main Street improvements. Whether such professionals are consultants or municipal staff members will depend upon each community.

Since the plan that is prepared should be as realistic as possible, and since the budgets available for such improvements are usually relatively limited, cost estimates are an essential and integral part of the plan. These cost estimates should be made by comparing the

costs of various improvements, studying several alternatives or options and carefully analyzing the community's need in relation to the final impact of the improvements.

For example, a set of new traffic lights at the main intersection may cost as much as the planting of eighty trees. The issues in this case could be: which is more necessary or which has the greatest aesthetic impact? Other examples of these types of costing choices may include:

- Where a new crosswalk sign would cost as much as twenty benches and ten garbage bins;
- Where a sidewalk widening (and resurfacing) would be as costly as a parkette and pedestrian walkway.

3.3 Six Sample Plans

In spite of the unique characteristics of individual communities, in order to illustrate approaches to the preparation of an overall concept plan, six examples have been prepared.

The examples do not represent specific communities in Ontario. Rather, they are representative of typical Main Street configurations and features found throughout the Province. The sizes of the communities range from 3,000 to 30,000 population.

The budgets available for physical improvements range from about \$50,000 to \$150,000 – with repayment extending over the usual period of up to ten years.

All the cost figures shown are approximate and are based on information available from a variety of manufacturers and suppliers; the figures are accurate to June, 1979 and are given in 1979 dollars.

Three things should be kept in mind when referring to these examples:

- Both the concept plans and their budgets are intended to serve as *guidelines* and not as working drawings for any particular community.
- The individual components included may come in a range of costs. For instance, a pergola can cost as little as \$500 or as much as \$10,000, depending upon such factors as design, size, materials used and the effect desired.
- Administrative and maintenance costs are not included.

* Planners, architects, landscape architects, urban designers, traffic and civil engineers, lighting specialists and so on.

EXAMPLE 1: A COMMUNITY OF 3000 PERSONS

— MAIN STREET BUDGET OF \$60,000

Existing Conditions

- linear Main Street: all major commercial activities are spread along one road
- roadway is currently four lanes wide with the outside lanes used for parallel parking (unmetered)
- no major traffic flow problems
- the amount of on- and off-street parking is considered inadequate: not enough spaces in the proper places
- roadway and sidewalk pavements are in very poor condition: cracked and broken with some frost damage
- there is a significant amount of under-utilized space behind Main Street buildings with access possible via a vacant lot
- there are no pedestrian crosswalks or traffic lights in the heart of Main Street, consequently heavy pedestrian movement crossing the street is a potential hazard
- street lighting is high-level and oriented to vehicles; it is considered adequate

Proposed Improvements









- low traffic volume allows narrowing of the roadway to two traffic lanes
- on-street parking will be provided in bays, staggered along the street on both sides
- the sidewalk will be widened and partially repaved with decorative materials; elsewhere conventional concrete sidewalks will be poured
- a crosswalk will be painted on Main Street and appropriate signs set up to identify the crosswalk
- other sidewalk improvements will include tree planting and seating areas with litter containers and planters
- this reconstruction will require replacement of fire hydrants, catch basins, curbs and gutters, and repaving of the roadway
- if possible, overhead wires should be placed under-ground when these works are being carried out
- new off-street parking will be provided in the rear of Main Street buildings
- the parking lot will be screened from Main Street by a 6-foot high cedar fence and shrubbery

The Cost of Improvements

Parking Lot: asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 1200m ²	=	\$8,400
Parking Lot Screen: Cedar fencing and planting	\$60m x 40m + 1000	=	3,400
Parking Signs		=	700
Trees with grates	14 trees x \$400	=	5,600
Benches	4 pcs x \$400	=	1,600
Garbage bins	4 pcs x \$200	=	800
Parking Lot lighting	2 pcs x \$2000	=	4,000
Concrete sidewalk repaving	\$30/m ² x 100m ²	=	3,000
Decorative brick paving	\$60/m ² x 100m ²	=	6,000
Curb and gutter	\$15/m x 200m	=	3,000
Catch basins	4 pcs x \$1,000	=	4,000
Fire hydrants moving	4 pcs x \$2,000	=	8,000
Cross walk sign			

THE TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS \$58,500

LEGEND

-  Signage - parking, mall and walkways
-  Lights - parking and pedestrian
-  Telephone booth
-  News vending machines
-  Garbage bin
-  Bench
-  Cedar fence screening
-  Hedge screening

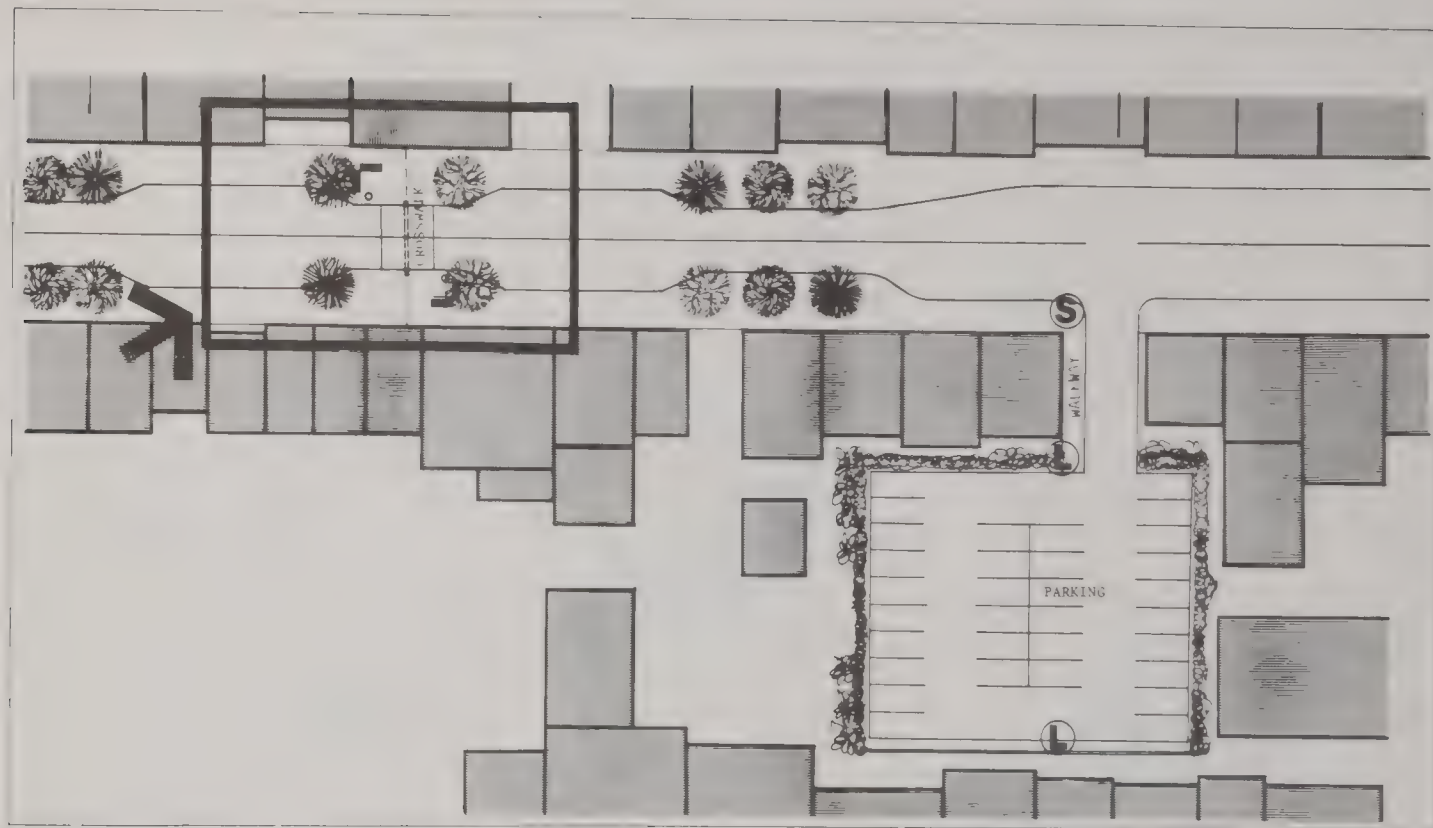


Figure 7. Plan 1, low budget improvements to a linear Main Street with off-street parking and widened sidewalks along Main Street. The box outlines the area sketched in more detail on the following page and the arrow indicates the direction of the artist's perspective.

Figure 8. A close-up view of Plan 1. The specially paved and widened sections of the sidewalk allow separation of seating and landscaped areas from the main pedestrian flow and a new crosswalk provides a safe pedestrian route to the opposite side of the street.



EXAMPLE 2: A COMMUNITY OF 6,000 PERSONS

— MAIN STREET BUDGET OF \$62,000

Existing Conditions

- Main Street is two intersecting streets (a crossroads) with the most significant retail store concentration in the south-west quadrant
- in this quadrant, there is a large under-utilized area behind the buildings; currently it is used for storage, employee parking and garbage collection
- traffic circulation is not a problem
- sufficient on- and off-street parking is available in or near the core
- both roadway and sidewalk pavements are in good condition
- street lighting is the high-level type, but it serves its purpose quite well; the lamp standards and fixtures are only five years old.

Proposed Improvements

- development of a pedestrian court in rear of the busiest commercial establishments – using now vacant land; this court should become a focal point for much of the activity downtown
- existing laneways and two vacant lots will be used to provide pedestrian access to the court
- stores will be able to open new entrances onto the courtyard at both ground and second storey levels
- the courtyard will be surfaced with decorative paving stones, trees will be planted and benches, medium-level lighting and litter containers provided
- the access points to the court will also be resurfaced and lighting installed where required
- street improvements will include tree planting, several benches and litter containers, a telephone kiosk, a container for a news vending machine
- new parking bays will be provided on a two lane side street to increase the amount of parking available close to the courtyard
- these improvements do not include building improvements, such as new storefronts, windows, signs, doors onto courtyard; these will have to be funded by the individual businesses.

The Cost of Improvements

Decorative court paving	\$60/m ² x 400m ²	= \$24,000
Signs		= 1,000
Benches	10 pcs x \$400	= 4,000
Garbage bins	10 pcs x \$200	= 2,000
Telephone kiosk		= 2,000
News vending machine		= 2,000
Bay parking paving and curbs		= 3,000
Pedestrian lighting (court)	4 pcs x \$2000	= 8,000
Tree planting (in grates)	36 pcs x \$400	= 14,400
Tree planting (in ground)	9 pcs x \$50	= 450
Court landscaping		= 2,000

THE TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS	\$62,850
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LEGEND









-  Signage - parking, mall and walkways
-  Lights - parking and pedestrian
-  Telephone booth
-  News vending machines
-  Garbage bin
-  Bench
-  Cedar fence screening
-  Hedge screening



Figure 9. Plan 2, low budget improvements to an intersecting Main Street. An interior paved courtyard with four main pedestrian access points and softened with planted trees and shrubbery

EXAMPLE 3: A NORTHERN COMMUNITY OF 6,000 PERSONS – MAIN STREET BUDGET OF \$50,000

Existing Conditions

- Main Street business area is concentrated around a t-inter-section
- although Main Street is also a major highway, traffic circulation is quite good
- the roadway pavement is in good condition; extensive engineering and repair work would be uneconomic at this time
- parking is a problem on Main Street – disrupting traffic flow
- there is an insufficient number of off-street parking spaces
- the road right-of-way is extremely wide (33m), creating a high degree of separation between each side of the street
- there is a large amount of vacant space in the rear of buildings throughout the core area

Proposed Improvements









- boulevards will be installed on all sides of Main Street within three blocks of the t-intersection
- the boulevards should protect pedestrians from the roadway, as well as reduce the visual impact of Main Street width
- the boulevards will be landscaped during the summer months and, where they are not planted with trees and shrubs, the boulevards can be used for snow storage in the winter
- protection from the elements is one of the design essentials in a northern climate; awnings and trees can easily and inexpensively go a long way to provide this
- evergreen trees are excellent windbreaks. Permanent awnings if erected in a continuous manner along Main Street will also provide shelter from rain, snow and sun
- a new off-street parking lot for 30 cars will be constructed in the rear of Main Street buildings. A pedestrian walkway will be provided to Main Street. The lot will be properly signed, lighted and screened from nearby uses.

The Cost of Improvements

Tree planting with grates	26 pcs x \$400	=	10,400
Benches	8 pcs x \$400	=	3,200
Garbage bins	10 pcs x \$200	=	2,000
Aluminum awnings	14 pcs x \$1,000	=	14,000
Parking asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 1200m ²	=	8,400
Parking lighting	2 pcs x \$2,000	=	4,000
Parking signs	2 pcs x \$700	=	1,400
Walkway asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 30m ²	=	2,100
Walkway sign	1 pc x \$700	=	700

THE TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS: \$46,200

LEGEND

-  Signage - parking, mall and walkways
-  Lights - parking and pedestrian
-  Telephone booth
-  News vending machines
-  Garbage bin
-  Bench
-  Cedar fence screening
-  Hedge screening

EXAMPLE 4: A COMMUNITY OF 15,000 PERSONS -

— MAIN STREET BUDGET OF \$80,000

Existing Conditions

- major business activity in the community has developed along one Main Street
- the municipal offices are located downtown and the building itself has a unique heritage value, but is slightly run-down
- there is a large open park-space in front of the town hall, but it is not well-used or linked with the rest of downtown
- there is also a large vacant open space behind Main Street buildings
- the present traffic circulation system, pavement condition and street lighting do not present problems
- there is a shortage of on-street parking space in the busiest section of downtown

Proposed Improvements

- the sidewalk streetscape will be up-graded: trees will be planted and pedestrian lighting, benches, and litter containers will be installed
- some decorative paving materials will be used on the sidewalk to designate rest areas, street corners and so on
- the park-space in front of the municipal building will be re-designed as a central gathering place (for a concert or open air meeting) and as a rest area for shoppers
- the space will be landscaped to suit the character of the town hall
- the town hall will receive a face-lift and inside offices will be renovated (not covered in the expenditures below)
- a new municipal parking lot behind the town hall will be built
- more off-street parking will also be provided for 44 cars at the back of the Main Street buildings. Improvements related to this parking lot will include: paving, two pedestrian walkways, lightings, signs, and screening from the residential areas behind









The Cost of Improvements:

Parking Lots: asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 1200m ²	=	\$8,400
lighting	4 pcs x \$2,000	=	8,000
sign		=	700
screening-cedar fencing	\$60/m x 150m	=	9,000
-hedge planting		=	1,000
walkway signs	2 pcs x \$700	=	1,400
walkway asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 30m ²	=	210
Tree planting: in grades	14 pcs x \$400	=	5,600
in ground	20 pcs x \$50	=	1,000
Telephone booths	2 pcs x \$2,000	=	4,000
News vending machine		=	2,000
Benches	12 pcs x \$400	=	4,800
Garbage bins	12 pcs x \$200	=	2,400
Decorative paving	\$60/m ² x 400m ²	=	24,000

THE TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS:

\$72,510

LEGEND

-  Signage - parking, mall and walkways
-  Lights - parking and pedestrian
-  Telephone booth
-  News vending machines
-  Garbage bin
-  Bench
-  Cedar fence screening
-  Hedge screening

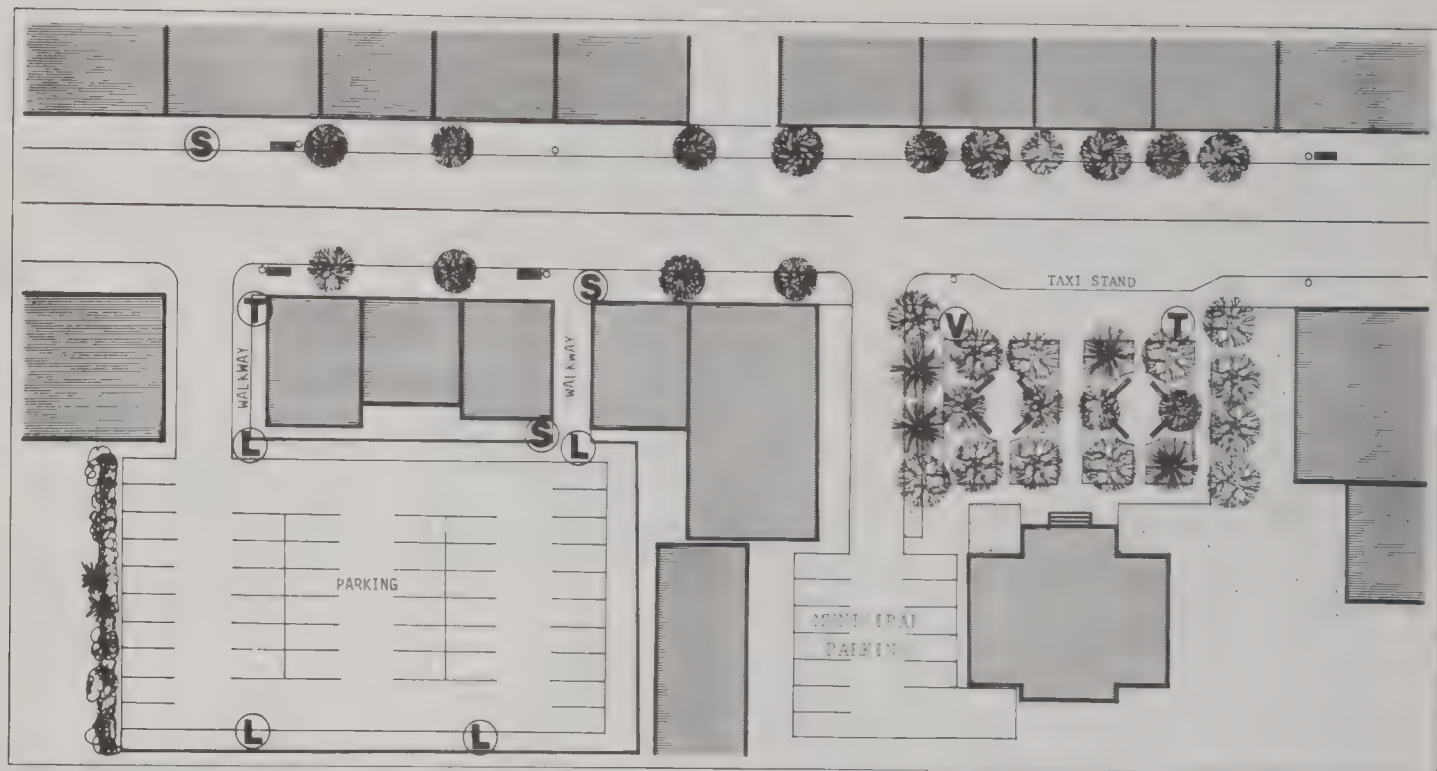


Figure 11. Plan 4, low budget improvements to a linear Main Street with prominent heritage properties. Improve park to accent heritage buildings and to act as a focal point for Main Street. Remove on-street parking and build large new lot in rear of Main Street.

EXAMPLE 5: A COMMUNITY OF 20,000 PERSONS

A MAIN STREET BUDGET OF \$120,000

Existing Conditions

- the central business district in this community has developed around the major intersection of two intersecting streets
- there remain a number of vacant lots in downtown, as well as several derelict or under-utilized spaces beside or behind Main Street buildings
- an attractive, but visually unexploited resource is the small river which runs through the heart of downtown
- there are two major circulation problems: insufficient parking and unsafe pedestrian crossing at the major intersection
- road and sidewalk pavements, street lighting, curbs, hydrants and catch basins appear to be in fairly good condition
- Main Street, despite its relative prosperity, does not look at all interesting or exciting
- there is no spatial relationship or direct access to the river. The river banks are unkempt, overgrown with weeds and eroded in certain places

Proposed Improvements









- a large vacant lot which connects Main Street and the river will be acquired, and designed as a small park and a visual connection between the two
- at the point where the river passes under Main Street, stairs and a pedestrian walkway will be provided to give direct access to the extensive park system along the river
- these improvements should create a number of new opportunities to link business and shopping with recreation
- a parking lot for 45 cars will be developed in the rear of Main Street. There will be two vehicle access/egress points from Main Street, as well as a separate pedestrian walkway
- this parking lot will be screened by 6-foot high cedar fencing on one side, a hedge on two other sides and on the fourth will be a landscaped parkette
- the parkette will have a strategic position between the parking lot and the main intersection in downtown. It may become heavily used as a public space
- a pedestrian crosswalk will be provided at the entrance/exit of the parking lot, to allow better, safer crossing of the roadway
- other streetscape improvements will include benches, litter containers, trees, shrubs and decorative repaving of parts of the sidewalk

The Cost of Improvements:

Parking Lot: paving	7/m ² x 1800m ²	= \$12,600
lighting	4 pcs x \$2000	= 8,000
cedar screening	\$60/m x 50m	= 3,000
green screening		= 1,000
signs	2 pcs x \$700	= 1,400
Walkway & parkette concrete paving	\$30/m ² x 230m ²	= 6,900
Crosswalk sign		= 10,000
Telephone booths	2 pcs x \$2000	= 4,000
News vending machines	2 pcs x \$2000	= 4,000
Benches	16 pcs x \$400	= 6,400
Garbage bins	20 pcs x \$200	= 4,000
Park walkways and stairs		= 8,000
Park landscaping		= 5,000
Tree planting: with grates	26 pcs x \$400	= 10,400
in ground	27 pcs x \$50	= 1,350
Decorative sidewalk and parkette paving	\$60/m ² x 400m ²	= 24,000

THE TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS \$110,750

LEGEND

-  Signage - parking, mall and walkways
-  Lights - parking and pedestrian
-  Telephone booth
-  News vending machines
-  Garbage bin
-  Bench
-  Cedar fence screening
-  Hedge screening

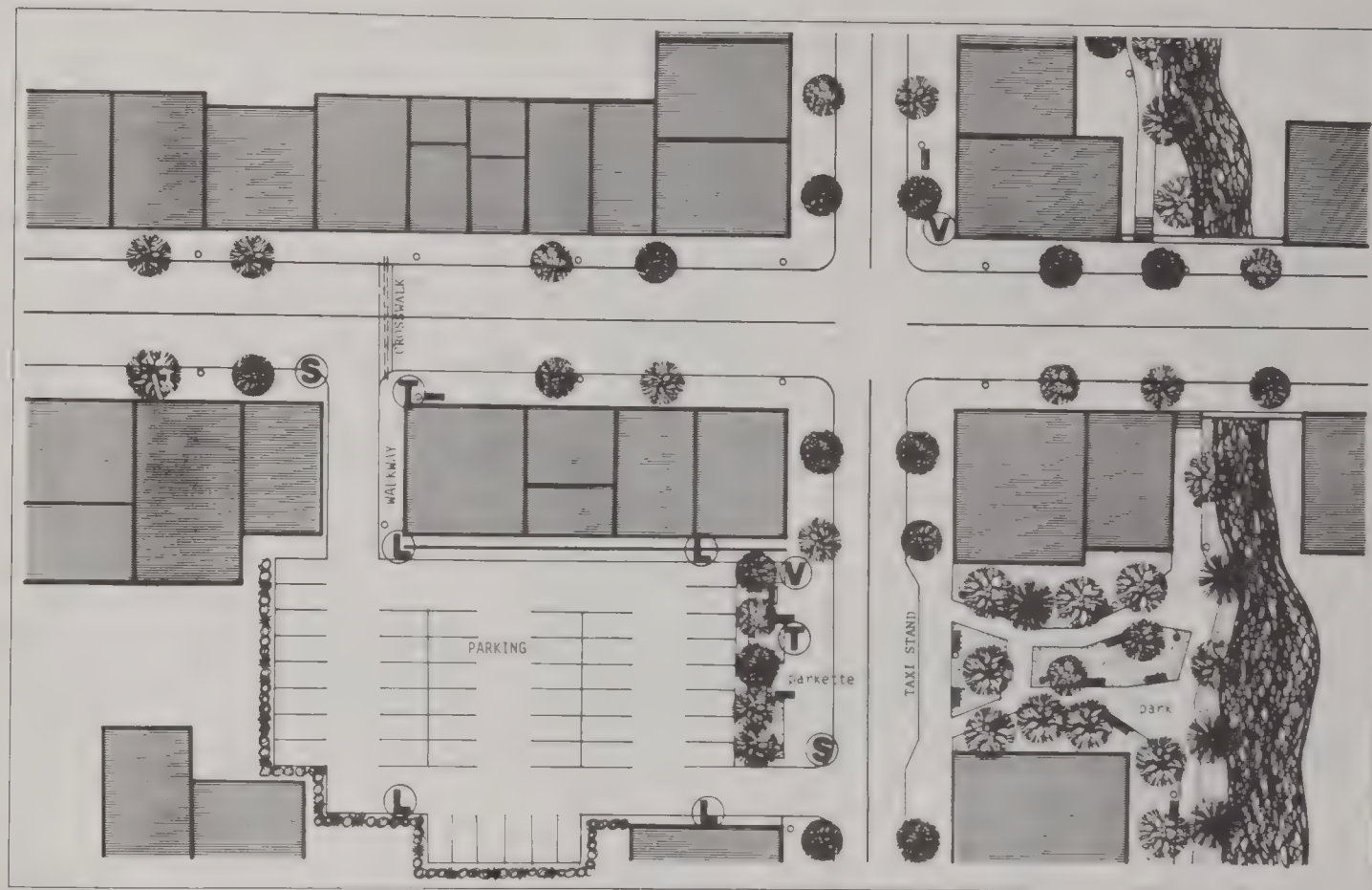


Figure 12. Plan 5, higher budget improvements to an intersecting Main Street, incorporating the river as a significant natural feature into the streetscape. Parking will be removed from Main Street with a sizable parking lot provided to the rear of the buildings. The lot will be screened from view by a parkette and hedge row.

EXAMPLE 6: A COMMUNITY OF 30,000 PERSONS**— A MAIN STREET BUDGET OF \$190,000****Existing Conditions**

- the central commercial core is laid out on two parallel streets, with one perpendicular road link between them (Trillium Lane)
- traffic is evenly distributed in volume along both streets
- Trillium Lane, however, has very little traffic at all and is often blocked by loading/unloading vehicles
- general circulation does not require major changes
- a number of small problems, however, should be remedied: the tendency to use Trillium Lane as a short cut between the two major streets has caused left turn problems and congestion on the major roadways; there is a large volume of uncontrolled pedestrian street crossing at the two major intersections; parking is inadequate
- no improvements have been made to the streetscape and as a result there is ample opportunity to improve downtown for the pedestrian

Proposed Improvements

- closure of Trillium Lane (70m long) to vehicular traffic and conversion into a year-round pedestrian mall
- the mall will be designed as a system including decorative paving, landscaping, pergolas, pedestrian-level lighting, information signs, seating areas, litter containers, telephone booths, newspaper vending machines and awnings suspended over store-fronts
- the design and layout of the mall will be complemented by similar streetscape improvements along the two major thoroughfares
- a large vacant space between Main Street buildings will be turned into a parking lot. There will be two vehicle access points from the major roadways and a pedestrian walkway to the mall
- the parking lot will be screened all around, lighted and signed









The Cost of Improvements:

Concrete mall paving	\$30/m ² x 800m ²	= \$24,000
Decorative mall paving	\$60/m ² x 400m ²	= 24,000
Mall landscaping (planters & painting)		= 5,000
Benches	6 pcs x \$1000	= 6,000
Pergolas	2 pcs x \$5000	= 10,000
Pedestrian lighting	8 lights x \$1500	= 12,000
Mall signs	2 pcs x \$5000	= 10,000
Awnings	10 pcs x \$1000	= 10,000
Pedestrian crosswalk and signs	2 pcs x \$10000	= 20,000
Telephone booths	2 pcs x \$2000	= 4,000
News vending machines	2 pcs x \$2000	= 4,000
Pedestrian walkways asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 300m ²	= 2,100
Pedestrian walkway sign		= 700
Tree planting with grates	40 x \$400	= 16,000
Garbage bins	20 pcs x \$200	= 4,000
Parking asphalt paving	\$7/m ² x 1800m ²	= 12,600
Parking lighting	4 pcs x \$2000	= 8,000
Parking sign	2 pcs x \$700	= 1,400
Parking screening	\$60/m x 100m + 1000	= 7,000
Hydrant moving	2 pcs x \$2000	= 4,000
New catch basins	4 pcs x \$1000	= 4,000

THE TOTAL COST OF IMPROVEMENTS**\$188,800**

Note: The above costs do not include land acquisition and some construction costs that will be covered by the municipality and the Province.

LEGEND

-  Signage - parking, mall and walkways
-  Lights - parking and pedestrian
-  Telephone booth
-  News vending machines
-  Garbage bin
-  Bench
-  Cedar fence screening
-  Hedge screening

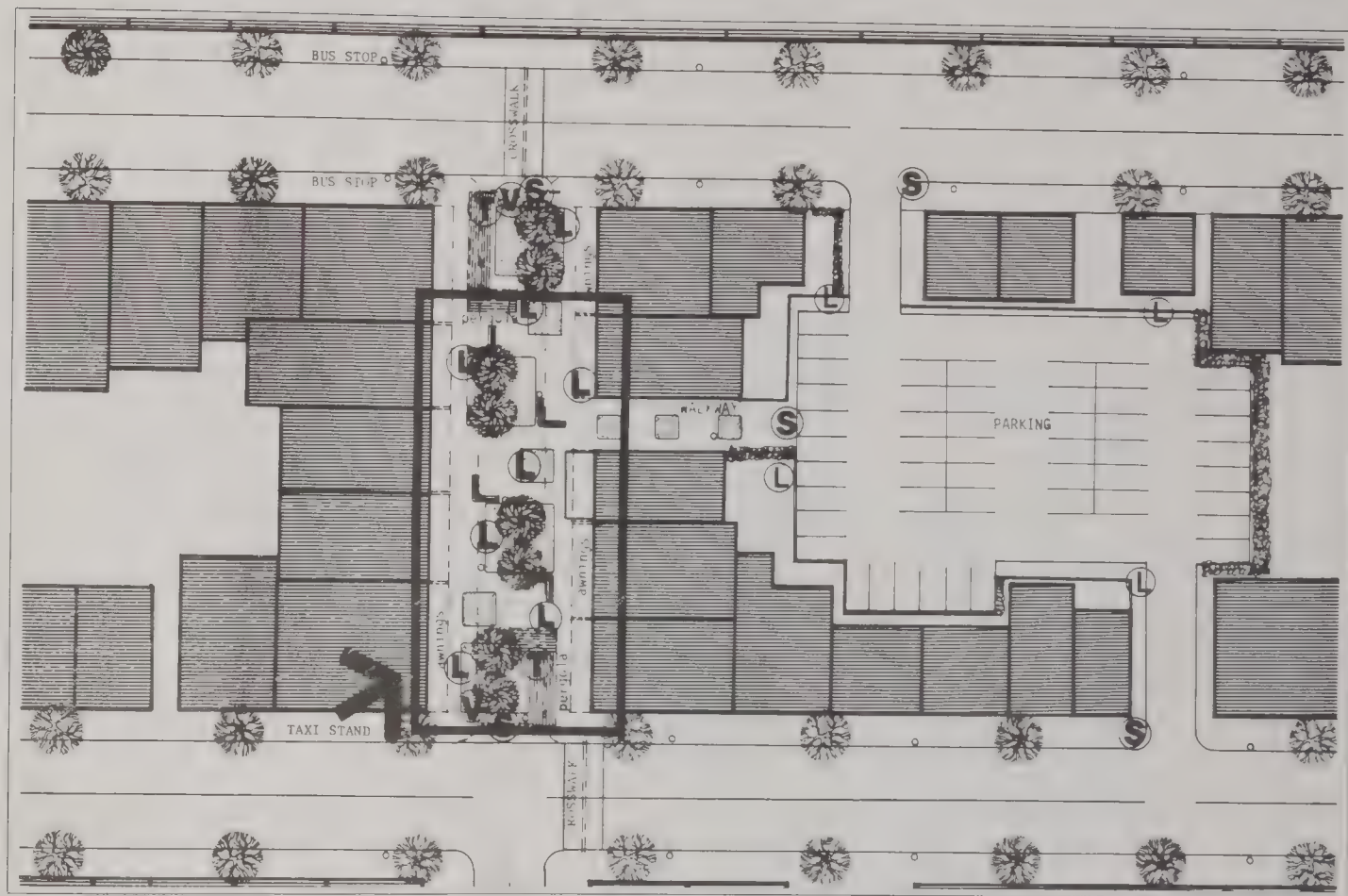
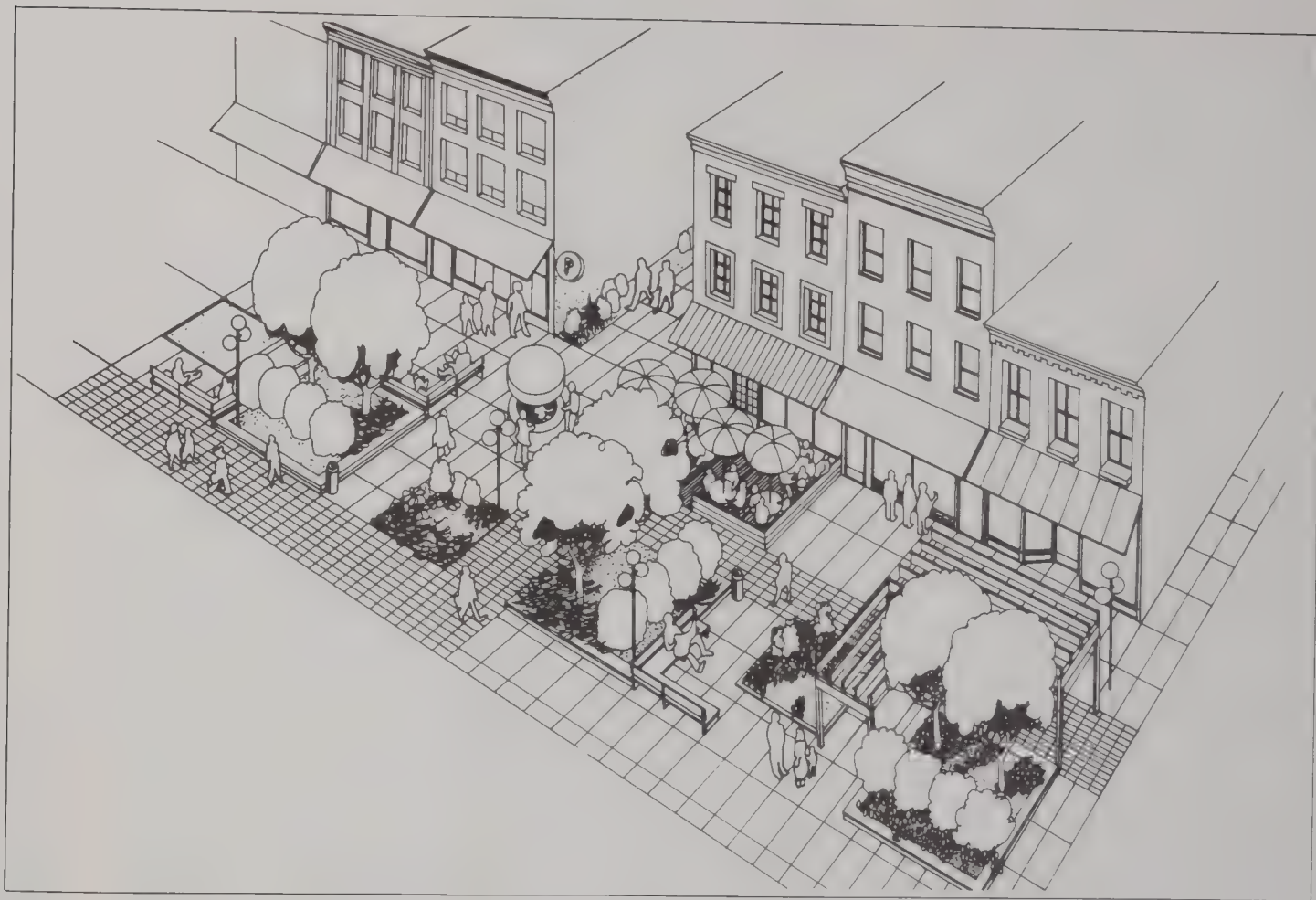


Figure 13. Plan 6, higher budget improvements for two parallel but connected Main Streets. The connecting street has been closed to vehicular traffic and a pedestrian mall created. Poorly used space behind buildings has been developed for a parking lot. Pergolas provide shade and an attractive addition to the mall. The box outlines the area sketched in more detail on the following page and the arrow indicates the direction of the artist's perspective.

Figure 14. A close-up view of Plan 6: The Pedestrian Mall. All overhead wires have been removed. High level lighting has been removed and replaced by medium level lighting oriented to pedestrian use of the area. The main footpath has been identified by use of decorative paving materials.





4. design guidelines

4.0 Design Guidelines for Main Street

The quality of the Main Street environment depends both on an overall plan and on the design, selection and siting of individual improvements. In the previous chapters, discussion centred on the need for an overall plan for Main Street, its preparation and its contents. The focus of this chapter is design and the factors which will influence the selection and siting of Main Street improvements.

The variety of improvements an individual community can undertake is endless. Consequently, the opportunities for innovative, good design are also unlimited. This handbook is directed toward the improvement of public buildings and spaces which, it is hoped, will act as a catalyst for further private and community initiatives. In this chapter design guidelines are provided for improvements in four main areas, those most likely to be tackled under the Main Street Program:

- Unique Features
- Circulation Systems
- Street Furniture and Landscaping
- Public Buildings and Open Spaces

A number of specific improvement projects are examined under each of these headings. This is not a complete list of all changes possible in the downtown. However, it illustrates typical improvements and the suggested approach to the design, siting and selection of improvements set out here may be easily adapted for improvements not explicitly covered.

The guidelines for each component begin, first of all, with a discussion of *potential* -- the factors to be considered when determining which improvements are required for or which would enhance Main Street. Major elements of potential are the unique features of downtown.

Secondly, current *problems* are discussed. This focusses on the current condition of downtown and on difficulties which can be observed with traffic circulation, existing street furniture, and public buildings and open spaces.

Thirdly, a variety of possible *solutions* are suggested to demonstrate the range of design options any one community may have.

Fourthly, *design considerations* are set out. These considerations describe a number of practical concerns which should be taken into account when a particular improvement is chosen, eg., material selection, maintenance.

Fifthly, where appropriate, average item *costs* are given for improvements. The costs are in 1979 dollars and the average derived from a telephone survey of manufacturers in the Province of Ontario.

Finally, the potential *benefits* to the community from the improvements are outlined. This discussion of benefits will be limited to fairly typical positive impacts any municipality might expect to receive.

Several considerations underlie this approach:

- *self-help*: Improvements can be very costly, particularly if purchased ready-made from the manufacturer. Communities should make use of local resources wherever possible, to reduce costs and to stimulate public involvement in the project. Involvement may be one way to reduce the incidence of vandalism -- a significant consideration in choosing certain improvements. For example in one municipality high school students constructed the benches, planters and litter containers for Main Street.
- *doing more for less*: Often a limited, but well-planned and executed use of certain improvements can be more effective than extensive use. For example, if decorative paving is a feature selected for Main Street sidewalks, the entire sidewalk does not have to be resurfaced in this material. Decorative paving can be used to highlight features (shop or building entrances) or to indicate certain spaces (rest area).
- *manageability*: Improvements should be easily maintained and they should also be durable, able to withstand continuous use and climatic variations.
- *every bit of spare land matters*: The full benefit of Main Street revitalization will not be felt if laneways, vacant lots and other surplus land areas are not up-graded to conform to the overall improvement program.



Figure 15. Riverfront walkway. A suspended walkway has been constructed and shopkeepers have opened new rear entrances to their stores. An outdoor cafe and public docks add interest and help to attract more visitors

4.1 Unique Features

Potential: Each community has unique features which set it apart from all others. These assets are the principal resources a community has to build upon and to exploit for successful downtown revitalization. The key is to develop and enhance the special character of Main Street so that it will attract and continue to appeal to a variety of people.

To identify potential, a community should understand the assets it has which set it apart from other communities. These assets may be found in:

- *the natural environment:* a river or lakefront, a mature stand of rare trees, the topography;
- *the buildings:* traditional streetscape along Main Street which reflects the distinctive social and historical flavour of the community, historic buildings, architecturally unique structures;
- *man-made features:* bridge, water tower, clock tower, bus or rail station;
- *tourist attractions:* craft shops, museum, theatres, fall fair, ethnic festivals;
- *community activities:* farmer's market, sidewalk sales, parades.



Figure 16. A typical under-utilized riverfront today.

Problems: Whether or not a community has begun to develop its unique features, current problems should also be assessed. These will be problems affecting the present use of downtown and its par-

ticular identity. A number of the most common problems are outlined below:

- *the natural environment:* flooding, erosion, climate (rain, snow, sun, wind);
- *buildings:* inappropriate existing building improvements (eg., paint is not colour coordinated, materials not durable); run-down buildings; vacant buildings, poor access/egress to buildings; not linked effectively with the core area;
- *man-made features:* a foot-bridge or clock tower which are run-down, under-utilized, abandoned, have poor access or location;
- *tourist attractions and downtown activities:* not coordinated with one another, poor access or location, poorly identified and advertised.

Solutions: Create new opportunities and clear-up current problems. A number of possible solutions are set out below:

Natural environment

- construct a riverfront walkway (illustrated)
- construct a pedestrian bridge over the river
- create a pedestrian walkway from Main Street to the river with a rest area overlooking water
- exploit a hilly location by improving pedestrian use and opening vistas of the downtown

Buildings

- renovate historic and/or interesting buildings
- utilize abandoned buildings for new purposes -- theatre, day-care centre, library, senior citizens housing, hotel, restaurant
- repair and coordinate restoration of traditional building facades on Main Street

Man-made Features

- renovate unusual structures for new public use or repair for improved image

Tourist Attractions and/or Downtown Activities

- initiate a farmer's market, craft market or other activities
- improve museum or other cultural attractions

Design Considerations

- Trendy design or ideas can fade quickly. Revitalization of unique features should concentrate on achieving long term results and a lasting impact.
- Renovation of certain features such as an historic building for a theatre or a pedestrian bridge should be done only if they serve a useful purpose. In most cases, the usefulness or function of a feature is as important as its visual impact.
- Rehabilitation of historic buildings should take into account the immediately adjacent properties -- their condition, style and use.

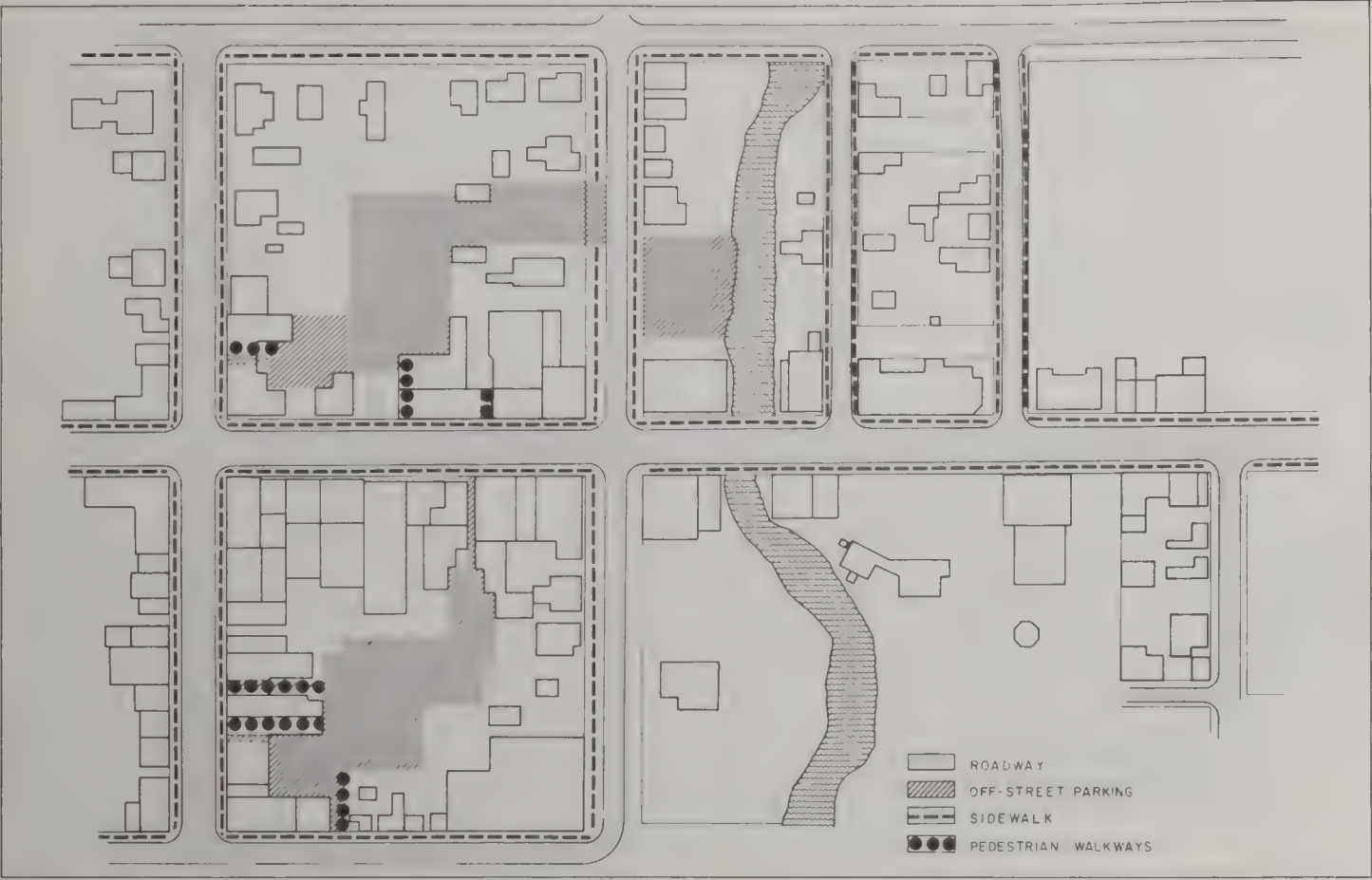


Figure 17. Circulation Systems

4.2 Circulation Systems

One of the most complex aspects of Main Street revitalization is the reordering or improvement of vehicular and pedestrian movement downtown. It also tends to be one of the most controversial aspects in any downtown improvement program.

Vehicular traffic is essential to downtown. Not only do vehicles bring shoppers, visitors and business people into the core, but vehicles also carry supplies to shops and businesses, deliver goods to customers, haul away garbage and provide protection (fire, ambulance, police).

Vehicular traffic, however, can dominate Main Street to the detriment of other users. Wide streets devoted to cars, heavy traffic flow and rows of parked cars can inhibit use of the street by pedestrians, by blocking access to certain areas. But pedestrians are an important part of the downtown scene and equally essential to its economic health.

There are many different ways to improve the movement of cars and people in the core area. Main Street may be narrowed and parallel streets up-graded to handle vehicular traffic diverted from Main Street. On the other hand, the removal of parked cars, installation of traffic signals and design of new turning lanes may substantially improve the appearance and function of Main Street without diverting automobiles.

The separation of vehicles from people by creating pedestrian malls has been in vogue over the past fifteen or twenty years. Complete physical separation of the two is not a prerequisite for Main Street revitalization. In fact, recent experience shows that pedestrian malls are expensive and do not necessarily result in the anticipated benefits.

First of all, a street (especially Main Street) cannot be closed in isolation from other activities or parts of the downtown. A street closing must be well planned and accompanied by changes to the surrounding street system to accommodate the extra traffic. Secondly, an effective pedestrian mall requires substantial redesign of the closed street. In most cases, this means at least resurfacing the street, landscaping and adding new street furniture and lighting. Often the impact of these changes is lessened if individual building owners do not also improve their store-fronts and coordinate signage with one another. Thirdly, the mall, to be successful, must be able to attract shoppers and business people. Adequate well-located parking, clearly identified pedestrian access and egress

points, appropriate loading facilities and garbage collection are essentials for success.

Thus, street closure is a complex task and unless well-executed it can have disastrous results. Business may decline as shoppers, used to driving to the store, take their business elsewhere. On the other hand, the additional business generated may not be sufficient to offset the tax levy costs to individual businesses for the improvements.

As a consequence, full pedestrianization of Main Street has not been considered in this report. Emphasis has been placed on the potential for finding a variety of solutions which balance, realistically, the needs of people against those of the automobile.

The various alternative solutions are discussed under the following headings: The Roadway, Sidewalk, Off-Street Parking and Pedestrian Walkways. Each is examined individually to assist communities to identify the solutions applicable to their own situation. Under the Roadway and Off-Street Parking sections, vehicular use of downtown is highlighted. Under the Sidewalk and Walkway, pedestrian use receives the most attention. In all cases, it should be remembered that individual improvements in one area (for instance the Roadway) should be coordinated with those in the other areas (such as the Sidewalk).

Figure 17 illustrates the various components of circulation systems, and shows how they each relate to one another. Most communities would find it extremely useful to develop similar plans; one showing the existing systems and the other indicating changes or improvements to be made.

4.2.1 The Roadway

Potential

To determine improvement potential for the roadway, a number of overall physical factors should be examined. These will influence the type of changes to be made.

Configuration: How is downtown laid out and which are the key streets forming the downtown: an extended or more compact downtown with one linear, or two parallel streets; a t-intersection or cross-street configuration? The street pattern will strongly influence traffic flow and the potential for adjustment or change.

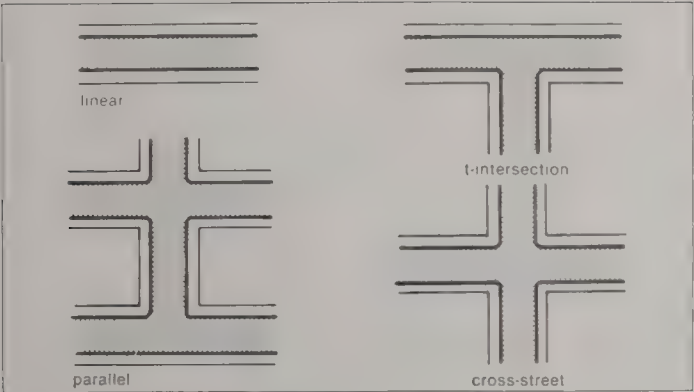


Figure 18. Four Main Street configurations.

Width of the Street: How wide is the street, how many traffic lanes are there and is there on-street parking? Does the roadway and its present use act as a barrier between buildings and shops on either side?

Scale of Buildings: How tall are the buildings in relation to the width of the street? For instance, a very wide street with low buildings does not contribute to a feeling of security and enclosure, while tall buildings and a very narrow street may seem like a canyon.

Interruptions to Traffic Flow: Is traffic congested at any point and do the traffic signals and crosswalks work effectively?

Function: Is the main street a provincial highway? If it is there may be some limitation on changes which can be introduced. The community should contact the Ministry of Transportation and Communications on this matter.

Problems

Current problems should be identified with respect to the use and condition of the roadway.

Functional Roadway Problems

- roadway too narrow to accommodate the amount of traffic
- traffic jams: when, where, why?
- conflict between vehicles and pedestrians (jay-walking, turning corners, etc.)
- speeding
- turning difficulties



Figure 19. Example of a wide roadway dominated by parked cars

On-Street Parking

- how many legal spaces, where?
- use: turnover, all-day parking by employees, vacant spaces
- conflict with traffic flow, as people pull into or out of parking spaces
- illegal parking or stopping

Loading Zones

- are there designated zones?
- use: frequency, suited for purpose
- location and relation to stores

Condition

- require repair, repaving, lines painted

Special Uses

- taxis, standing zones
- buses
- adequacy of roadway for these purposes

Solutions

There are a number of alternatives a community can employ with respect to roadway improvements:

No change in width: Reorganize or adjust current traffic flow, if required, with use of turning lanes, signs, and signal lights.

Narrow the roadway to two or three lanes: This will likely require the removal of parking on one or both sides of the road. Traffic flow should also be improved on adjacent parallel streets, along with improvements to signage and road markings.

Narrow the roadway in a staggered fashion (serpentine pattern):

This normally requires removal of all on-street parking although bays may be provided for bus stops, loading and stopping vehicles. This serpentine pattern, however, may have some unintended results. The sharp contrast of a winding street to a straight line of buildings may create visual discontinuity. Furthermore, an abrupt change from a straight to a winding two-lane roadway may result in traffic congestion and driver confusion.

Boulevard: An extremely wide roadway may be narrowed quite effectively with the use of a centre boulevard. In winter months, the boulevard may be used to pile snow removed from the roadway. It may be treated as a design feature, with landscaping, during warm seasons.

Side-street closure: Rather than completely closing Main Street to vehicular traffic, a connecting side street (not heavily used by cars and trucks) may be turned into a year-round or seasonal pedestrian mall. Note that access for emergency vehicles will have to be provided with a minimum 16-foot right-of-way.

Such major adjustments to the roadway must be coordinated with other improvements. Parking facilities must be provided elsewhere, traffic lanes marked, proper signs installed, traffic signals installed and pedestrian crossings set up. However, the most important related changes will be those to neighbouring roads which will have to be adjusted to accommodate a higher volume of traffic.

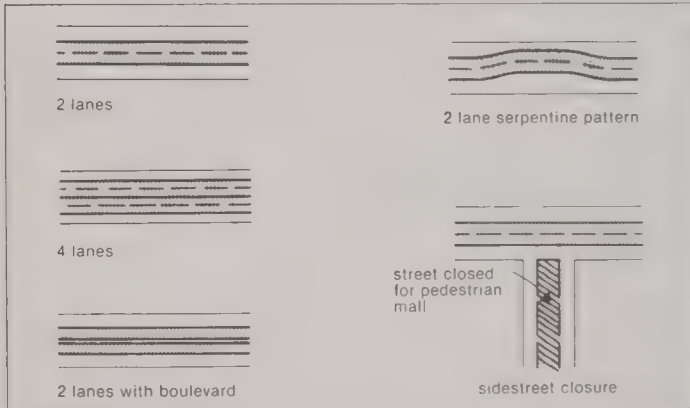


Figure 20. Improving the roadway alignment (5 alternatives).

A number of other less dramatic, but quite effective, roadway improvements can also be considered:

- repave Main Street with asphalt or decorative materials
- paint the street a colour
- reduce the speed limit
- centralize or otherwise strategically locate special uses, such as taxi stands, loading bays
- provide bicycle lanes (painted lines on pavement)

Design Considerations

The type of improvements chosen and the manner in which they are set in place is very important:

- If the roadway is to be repaved or altered, catch basins, curbs, gutters and underground wires may also have to be adjusted. Their design, use and accessibility can be improved at this time.
- Different textures of pavement can be used quite effectively to identify different roadway areas for different uses (pedestrian crossings, parking spaces, etc.). Decorative paving stones may, however, require more maintenance than asphalt or concrete.
- To minimize the impact of on-street parking, parallel (to the curb) parking spaces would be more suitable than angled spaces.
- Consideration should be given to removal of parking meters. They clutter the sidewalk and by no means "pay their own way". They also can be a source of irritation to both visitors and residents.
- Vehicular signs need not be overly large or garish to be effective. Often simple, well-placed signs have a better impact.

Costs	Traffic Signals (4):	\$37,000 (\$9,250 each)
	Illuminated Crosswalk Sign:	\$10,000
	Traffic Signs:	\$700
	Asphalt Paving:	\$7.50/m²

Impact

Significant benefits can be gained from roadway improvements, since the roadway is one of the dominant features of the downtown environment.

A reduction in the total volume of vehicles entering Main Street will enhance use of the area by pedestrians. There will be greater safety and convenience in crossing the street.

Well-situated loading bays (out of the traffic flow) will benefit shops and businesses by increasing the time available for loading and unloading commercial vehicles, improving safety and security.

4.2.2 The Sidewalk

Potential

Proposed roadway solutions will directly affect potential sidewalk improvements. As a first step, however, the sidewalk should be evaluated on its own merits, and there are four areas where opportunities for improvement should be considered:

Width of Sidewalk: Is the sidewalk a uniform width for the full length of Main Street? Note where differences occur and what is the purpose of the wider or narrower than usual space. What potential exists for widening the sidewalk into the block, as opposed to into the street?

Length of Sidewalk: Do sidewalks extend the full length of Main Street and connect into a community-wide system? If they do not, why should an extension be considered?

Circulation: Do sidewalks connect with other pedestrian features, such as walkways, special attractions, parking areas?

Potential for Multiple Use: Beyond pedestrian circulation, can sidewalks be used for seating/rest areas, sidewalk sales, displays, etc.?

Once these factors have been discussed, the potential for improvements should be assessed in conjunction with roadway potential. For example, if sidewalks are considered too narrow, can they be widened by decreasing roadway width (reducing traffic lanes or on-street parking)?

Problems

There are three main areas where sidewalk problems normally appear:

Current Use: Are sidewalks congested, that is, too narrow for the volume of pedestrian traffic so that people frequently have to step onto the street? Are they cluttered with too many or poorly placed items of street furniture or utilities, (eg., benches, litter containers, parking meters)? Are street corners congested?

Existing Condition: Are the sidewalks in a state of good repair? What materials have presently been used and are they satisfactory (stand up to heavy use, enhance appearance of Main Street)?

Special Needs: Are there special needs which are not being met adequately now, such as roll-over curbs at corners for strollers, handicapped, etc.? Are there problems with other sidewalk uses, such as advertising, landscaping, etc.?

Solutions

As mentioned above, sidewalk improvements will have to be planned in close conjunction with roadway improvements. There are a variety of options to be considered:



Figure 21. Sidewalk in poor state of repair.

Widen sidewalks on one or both sides for the entire length of Main Street: to create more space for walking and setting out of street furniture, landscaped areas, utilities and so on. The sketch (Figure 22 opposite) illustrates sidewalk widenings where a portion of the sidewalk is widened more than the rest to accommodate street furniture.

Stagger sidewalk widenings on opposite sides of the street: to create areas for seating, landscaping, advertising, etc.

Widen sidewalks at intersection corners: to provide more room for and greater visibility of pedestrians. Figure 65 shows both a plan and a sketch of a street corner parkette. Note the extension of decorative paving to the sidewalk – the main pedestrian corridor.

Use decorative paving materials: to highlight activity areas or to indicate store entrances, or to create relief from standard concrete.

Design Considerations

Sidewalks can be widened in a variety of ways not only into the roadway, but also into the block by utilizing building set-backs, vacant lots and alleyways.

The width of the sidewalk should reflect its function and lots of variation is possible. For example, it does not make sense to widen a sidewalk where there are few pedestrians, unless pedestrian use is being encouraged in a tangible way (providing an incentive or attrac-

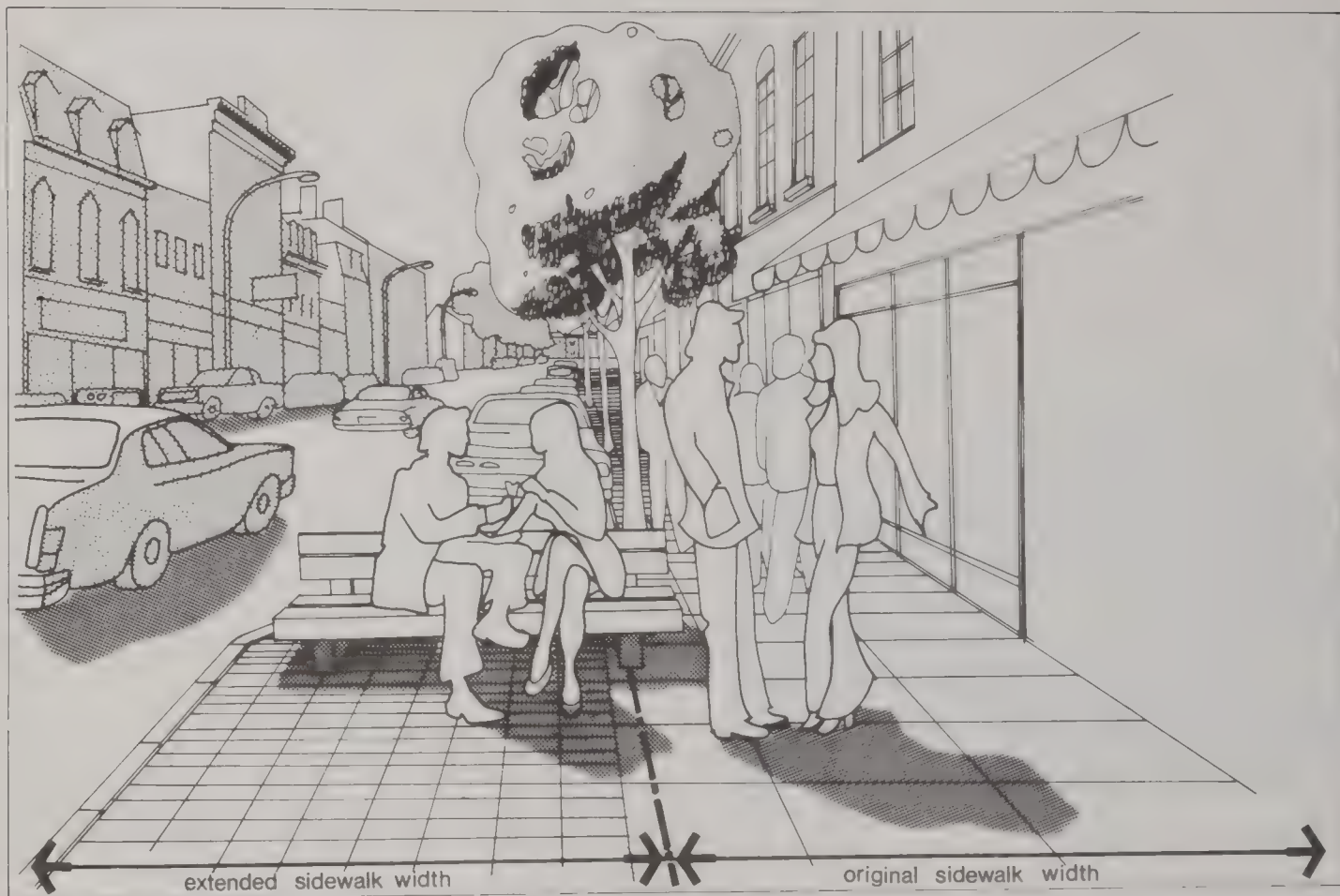


Figure 22. Widened sidewalk. Creates seating and landscaped areas, as well as a clear path for pedestrian movement

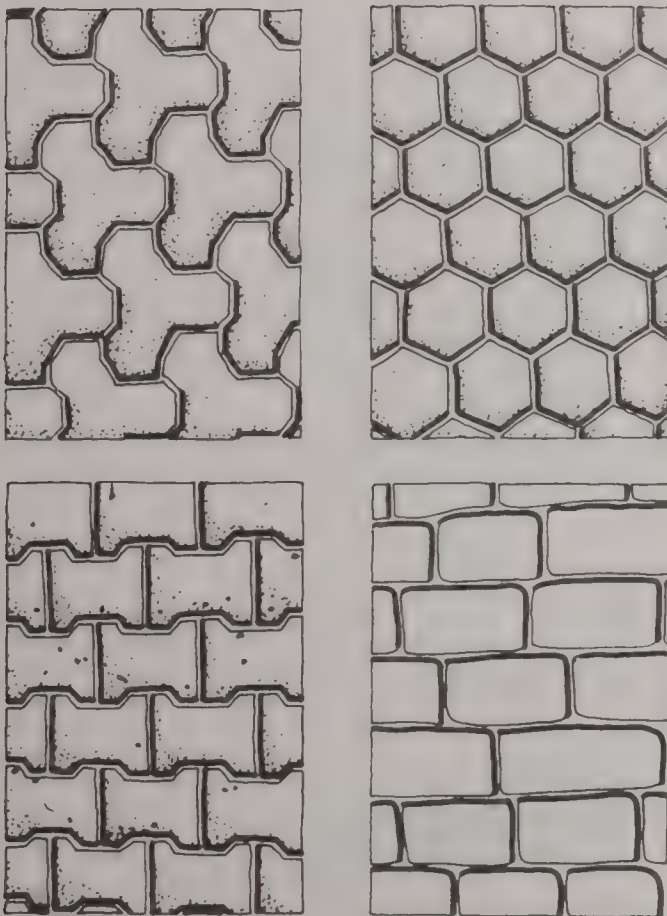


Figure 23. Examples of decorative paving brick.

tion). Similarly, if one side of the street is particularly exposed to wind or other elements, widening (without sheltering devices) may be a wasted expense. The layout of the sidewalk through the downtown should, in the end, reflect all potential uses: vehicle stopping, rest areas, access points, entrances and so on.

The placement of furniture and utilities on the sidewalk should again match the intended function. Benches every fifty feet will not be as appropriate as benches at specifically planned locations, such as bus stops or rest areas. Simple layouts should be preferred over highly decorative, complicated layouts of street furniture. This allows easier maintenance and installation.

Street furniture and utilities should not obstruct the pedestrian traffic flow; sharp projections and angles should be avoided to minimize the risk of accidents.

The entire sidewalk does not need decorative paving materials. In fact, use of decorative paving stones in strategic areas to highlight a feature or an area, to add colour and texture, will be most effective.

Where the sidewalk is extremely wide, landscaped boulevards along one side are useful to create a pedestrian corridor and to separate pedestrians from vehicular traffic.

Impacts

Like the roadway, the sidewalk forms an important, very visible element of the streetscape. Its treatment can provide safe, well-defined areas for pedestrian traffic and activities. People will be able to move more easily along the street, as well as have better access to shops and offices. The sidewalks can also be used for a variety of different activities if properly planned: advertising, community events, sales, or just talking with neighbours or friends. This broadens the use of downtown as a community centre, rather than as just a shopping place. An improved environment for people on Main Street may indirectly create a greater demand for commercial space in the core area.

4.2.3 Off-Street Parking

Potential

The potential for creating off-street parking in most smaller Ontario communities has seldom been exploited to its fullest. Land is often not used as if it were a scarce resource. Consequently, in small downtowns off-street parking may be provided in a number of unexpected places, as well as more obvious ones:

- municipally-owned land
- vacant privately-owned land which can be leased or purchased by the municipality
- vacant lots between, beside or behind existing buildings
- small street corner lots
- under-utilized space behind Main Street buildings
- converted warehousing or other unused large structures
- a square or meeting place which is only used periodically for such special events as a weekly open-air market.

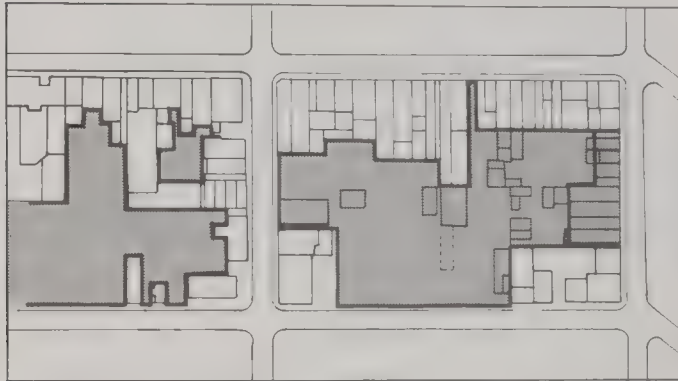


Figure 24. Common location of under-utilized space behind Main Street

Problems

The provision of adequate parking space in downtown is frequently the most contentious issue a community faces in its Main Street revitalization program. To gain an accurate assessment of what parking changes (if any) are required, a community must understand its current situation and problems in this area. The following should be considered:

Amount and Location: How many parking spaces are currently available on-and off-street and where are they located in relation to the Main Street shopping district? How many on-street spaces may be removed by roadway improvements?

Use: What is the frequency of use and how is this affected by ownership, rates charged, controls (limited to one hour parking)? Do vehicles other than cars use the lot?

Access/Egress: Are the entrances and exits well-marked for both pedestrians and vehicles? Do directional signs appear on Main Street and elsewhere in downtown?

Condition: Are the parking lots paved, spaces marked, well-lighted, signed, controlled by an attendant, screened from neighbouring properties and uses? How is snow removal carried out?



Figure 25. Frequent late winter condition of space behind Main Street.

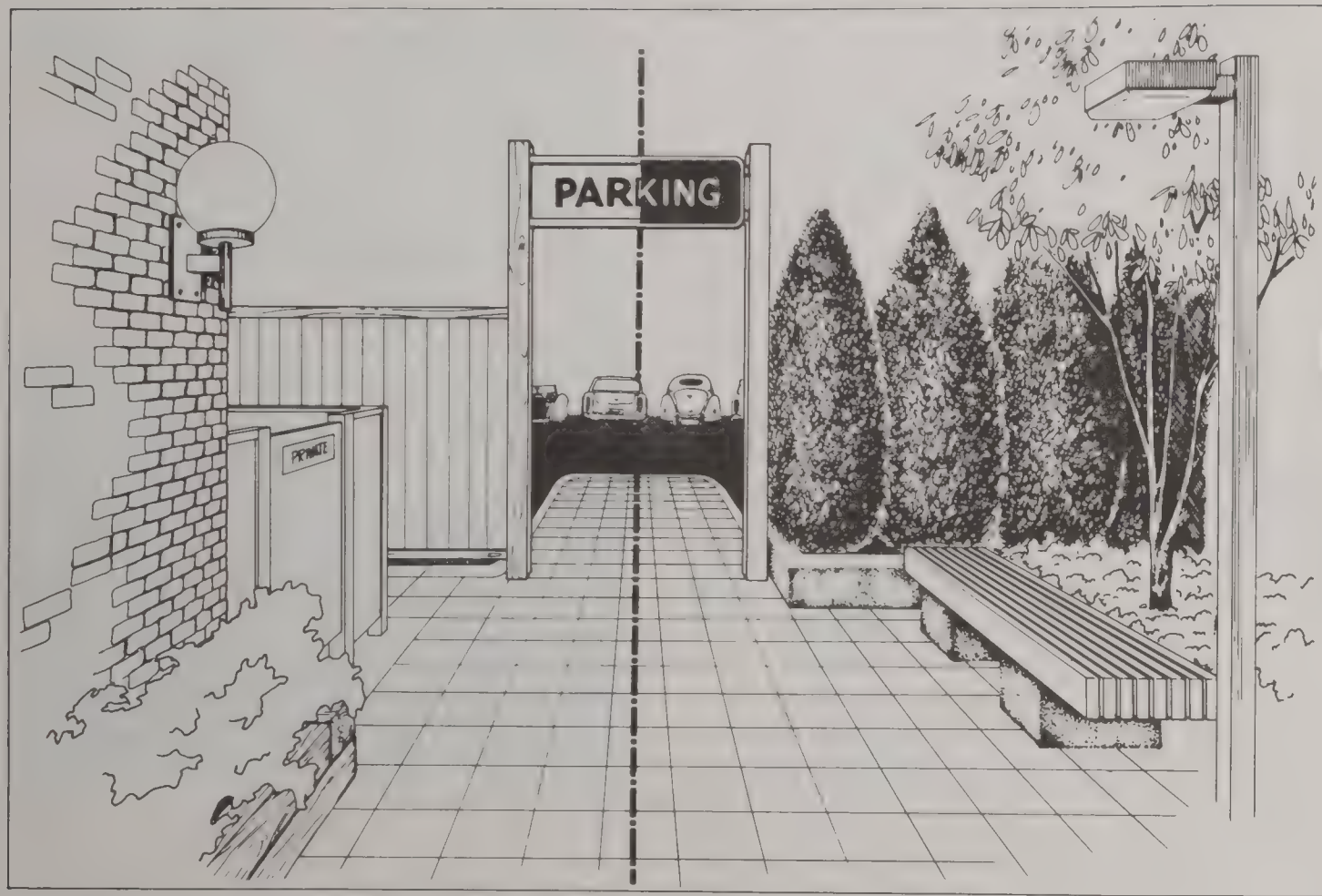


Figure 26. Screening a parking lot. On the right is shown a natural screen using a hedge and various shrubs. On the left, a simple cedar fence provides the screen. In both the accompanying furniture (lights, signs, planters, etc.) is complementary in design.

Solutions

The most common improvements to expand and/or enhance off-street parking facilities are:

- Improve existing facilities by providing pedestrian walkways directly from Main Street; placing signs in appropriate locations; screening the lot from the street; improving lighting, paving and landscaping. Figure 26 shows two different ways a lot may be screened from neighbouring properties: one with a wooden fence and the other with natural foliage. Both attempt to provide an attractive entrance to the parking lot, one that is integrated aesthetically with the surrounding environment.
- Create new parking lots by purchasing or leasing vacant lots, under-utilized land behind buildings and/or in the middle of a block, and improve.
- Convert a warehouse or other vacant building into a covered single or double-level parking garage.
- Use parking lots for other special purposes: bus and truck parking, bicycle parking, weekly market, flea market, open-air public meetings, concerts.

Design Considerations

An unpaved parking area can be both unsightly and unpleasant, particularly during and after a rain shower. Paving is the obvious solution, but due consideration should be given to water run-off. The amount of paved area in the vicinity should be assessed and the direction and amount of water run-off evaluated. Paving stones which allow percolation into the soil may be a necessary alternative in some places.

Parking lots can be paved with decorative materials or painted to alleviate the impact of a large expanse of concrete when not covered completely by cars. Special paving materials can be used to identify parking spaces, instead of painted lines. The initial expense may be quite high; therefore such use of decorative materials may be restricted to highly visible areas.

A number of smaller parking lots (30-40 cars) may be a more practical solution than one lot with a large capacity, say 200 cars. This will provide for better distribution of off-street parking space throughout the downtown, as well as less impact on one particular area.

Snow removal is a major consideration for parking lots and sufficient space (buffer zones, boulevards and so on) should be provided to pile snow.

When screening a parking lot from nearby buildings or pedestrians, care should be taken to integrate the type of materials used with ad-

jacent buildings and features. A variety of techniques are possible – landscaped boulevards, wooden fencing, bollards and so on. Landscaping may also be employed quite effectively inside the parking lot to differentiate between rows of cars, to provide shade and relief from a “sea of automobiles”. If possible, concrete blocks should not be used to mark the end of a space; they tend to be hazardous for pedestrians who cannot see them when a car is in the way and are an unnecessary form of demarcation – a painted line should suffice.

Signs are very important, and simple graphics are most effective. The location is also critical. If, for example, no street parking will be provided along Main Street, signs should be readily visible to indicate where parking is available – at all road entry routes to downtown and within the core itself.

Impact

The creation of new off-street parking lots and the improvement of existing ones should have a number of positive benefits for the community. First of all, well-located off-street parking will be safer, more convenient and more accessible for shoppers and others coming downtown. Secondly, well-maintained lots will generally enhance other improvements carried out along Main Street. A cluttered, unpaved, poorly lit rear parking lot will detract from a newly landscaped Main Street.

4.2.4 Pedestrian Walkways

Potential

Pedestrian walkways are car-free linkages for people on foot from Main Street to parking lots, parks, sidestreets, etc. Walkways take up very little space and in most communities there are usually a wide variety of small, under-utilized spaces which can be rehabilitated for this purpose:

- unused or little used laneways
- portion of a vacant lot
- a side-yard easement beside an existing building
- an arcade through a building
- conversion of an old carriage-way through a building

Problems

Walkways are most commonly used in conjunction with parking lots in the rear of buildings, although there are a number of other possibilities. The key concern, however, is to assess whether new walkways are needed and what improvements, if any, are required to up-grade existing walkways. Several issues should be examined here: *the length of Main Street blocks* (would a walkway in the mid-

die improve access to the rear of the buildings?); and *attractions* (a walkway should serve a functional purpose, such as moving people from Main Street to something, somewhere).

The most frequent problems in existing walkways are:

- poor lighting
- littered
- poor or no directional signs
- undecorated (paint, brick, etc.)
- unpaved
- improper drainage (dampness or puddles)



Figure 27. Seldom used and poorly kept passageway

Solutions

Create new or up-grade old pedestrian walkways which lead to a variety of spaces including parking lots, using:

- new low-level pedestrian lighting
- signs at either end
- paint, graphics, other decorative materials on walls
- pavement with proper drainage
- street furniture - litter containers, benches, planters
- information board
- telephones



Figure 28. Two well-planned walkways which are properly illuminated and designed

Design Considerations

A pedestrian walkway should be inviting – light and airy. The width, length and scale of the walkway will influence how this effect is achieved. For example, if the walkway is enclosed and fairly narrow, light colours and soft textures should be used wherever possible. The walkway should not be obstructed by street furniture and a distinct pathway should be readily visible to the pedestrian.

Simplicity in design and materials will make the walkway easier to maintain in the future. An open walkway which is quite wide, can also be used as a parkette or rest area at the same time.

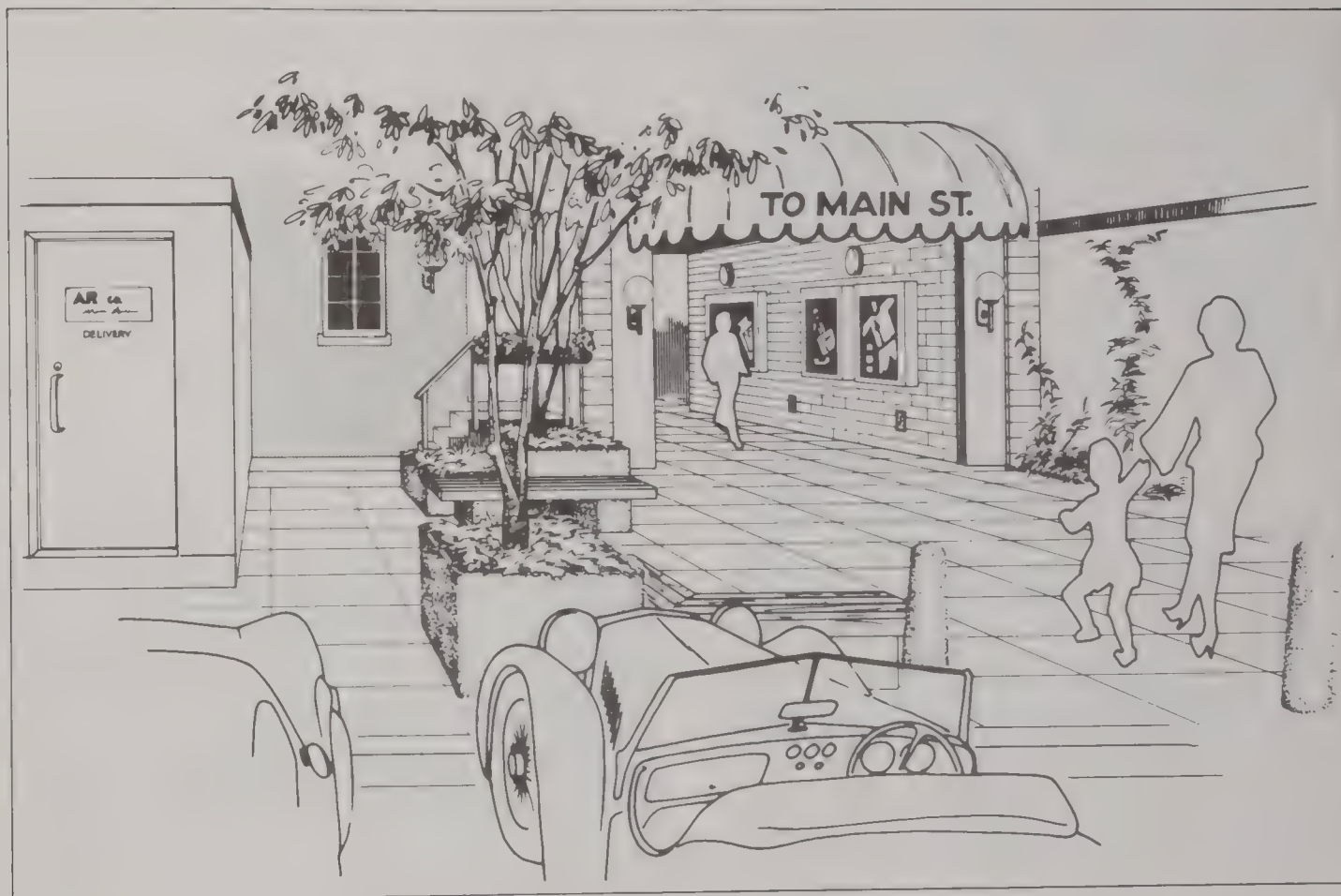


Figure 29. Entrance to a Pedestrian Walkway. Entranceway is prominently marked with a canopy, sign and bollards

4.3 Street Furniture and Landscaping

"Street furniture" covers a wide variety of items which can be used both to enhance Main Street and to improve its functioning. This section focuses on the most commonly used articles of street furniture and basic elements of urban landscaping:

planters	bollards
benches	lighting
litter containers	signs
kiosks, information boards	pedestrian shelters
fountains, pools	utilities
bike racks	newspaper stands

Potential

Most communities will already have a number of items of street furniture on Main Street. To estimate the potential for additions or changes to the existing situation, the community should, first of all, examine downtown requirements. If Main Street contains extensive street furnishings, few additions may be necessary. Or, if plenty of seating is available in a Main Street park or open space, additional sidewalk seating may be redundant.

Street furniture opportunities fall basically into three areas: functional, aesthetic, and spatial potential. *Functional opportunities* are those which occur where there is an unfulfilled need, eg., very few litter containers are provided on Main Street or no seating is available. *Aesthetic opportunities* may be found in ways to directly improve the visual appearance of Main Street, including removal of overhanging signs, appropriate use of colour and materials in street furnishings. *Spatial potential* occurs where there are natural gathering places, sunny sheltered locations, under-utilized or derelict spaces, street corners, protective spaces (bus stops) or wide sidewalks not fully used for pedestrian traffic.

Problems

The most common problems with existing street furniture have to do with their design, use and distribution in downtown:

Design: Is the item readily identifiable as, for example, a litter container; does it suit its purpose well; that is, are the benches comfortable; and does the furniture suit the surrounding environment?

Use: Are the items of street furniture utilized to their full potential; what condition is the furniture in; and has it proved durable and fairly easy to maintain; is the paint peeling; metal rusting?

Distribution: How many different items of street furniture are present now and where are they located? Is this distribution satisfactory and is it appropriately placed for users? Does the furniture clutter the sidewalk so that it obstructs pedestrian movement?

Solutions

There are many specific items of street furniture to choose from, as well as a wide variety of possible designs. The specific set of improvements chosen for any one community should be based upon an overall plan, which indicates the layout and location of the individual elements of street furniture. The plan will assist the community to coordinate the street furniture with the scale and character of the surrounding buildings and spaces. Also the use of materials, design and colours can be coordinated among the various individual items.

The following section on design considerations will examine each of the street furniture items individually, suggesting a range of good design solutions and how to avoid potential problems.

Design Considerations

4.3.1 Landscaping

Landscaping is an extremely important aspect of the overall streetscape. The section on planters will touch briefly on this area. However, both the function and value of landscaping extends far beyond the use of planters *per se* and covers trees, shrubs and flowers planted in a variety of different ways, to serve a variety of purposes.

Opportunities for effective landscaping exist almost everywhere in the downtown. Boulevards, parkettes, derelict spaces, as well as the sidewalk provide a wide range of possible locations and techniques. The size and scale of the space to be landscaped and its immediate surroundings will have a direct influence on the type of vegetation and layout selected. Trees, for instance, would probably be inappropriate along a narrow roadway, where they could be easily damaged by passing vehicles, or where they would disrupt pedestrian flow.

Maintenance, such as pruning, watering, fertilizing and replacing plants, should be easily carried out. The design should minimize, if possible, the accumulation of litter. Planters or other planting areas should not resemble litter containers and should be kept free of any litter.

In the winter time, salt and snow pose hazards to both trees and shrubs. In some instances, landscaped areas can be used to pile snow – those which are planted seasonally. However, year-round

planting areas could receive serious and irreparable damage from salt, if used for snow storage. For this reason also, landscaped areas should be set far enough back from the roadway so that they will not be sprayed with salt and slush from passing vehicles.

Landscaping basically fulfills three functions in an urban setting: *decorative*, providing relief from hard surfaces and adding colour and texture; *screening/buffering*, provides an opportunity to hide an unsightly building or wall, as well as to reduce traffic noise; *protective*, providing shelter from wind, sun, rain and snow.

The following considerations should be kept in mind when deciding to landscape a particular area:

- the size and species of trees, shrubs and plants should be chosen with care. Some trees are more vulnerable to damage and micro-climatic extremes than others. The advice of the Parks and Recreation Department and local organizations, such as the horticultural society, would be very useful here.
- the choice of type of vegetation should take into account whether the planting will be done in ground or in a container; the durability required given local climatic conditions; whether quick growth is required; degree of resistance to insects and disease; drainage; availability of plants in the area (that is, can damaged or dead plants be replaced easily and quickly); and the colour and texture desired.
- who will be responsible for day-to-day maintenance of the landscaped areas. Often their opinions are most useful in designing layout and selecting vegetation.



Figure 30. Decorative landscaping.



Figure 31. An example of street landscaping to create a buffer

4.3.2 Lighting

The high-masted concrete lamp standard and the wooden telephone pole tend to dominate the streetscape in many smaller Ontario communities. These two most common forms of Main Street lighting were developed several decades ago. Aesthetics and attention to the use of downtown by people on foot, as well as those in cars, were not major concerns at that time. The strictly functional purpose of this lighting is characterized by the numerous overhead wires strung between the poles. The net effect is cluttered and none too appealing to the eye. (See photo below).

Lighting which is oriented to vehicular use of downtown can discourage pedestrian use of the core. High-masted lamps illuminate the street well, but not necessarily the sidewalk. Dark shadows can be created by trees and the spacing of the lights may also leave unpleasant "black spots". In addition, parking lots or alleyways which are not properly lighted may deter night-time visits to the core.

To make a decision about what improvements should be carried out in any one community, attention should be directed, first of all, to how Main Street is used at night and, secondly, to existing lighting problems. The community should key on those areas where changes or new fixtures are really necessary – walkways, sidewalks or parking lots – before exploring the more creative opportunities.



Figure 32. High-level lighting.



Figure 33. Medium-level lighting.

As everyone becomes more concerned about energy conservation, it will be important for a community not to over-estimate its lighting requirements. Strategically placed low-level lighting may be more efficient and economical than overhead midway-type lighting. It is important to remember that there is an almost endless array of lighting fixtures on the market. Some are more expensive than others; all are relatively costly to install. Depending upon the needs of Main Street and the character of the area, the community may want to explore the design of their own light fixtures and alternative ways to handle existing overhead lights.

There are basically three kinds of lighting. *High-level lighting* is used for general purposes – illuminating the roadway and wider areas. These are normally mounted on tall concrete standards or telephone poles, although in certain areas they may be attached to buildings. *Medium-level lighting* is employed to light up smaller areas, primarily those used by pedestrians. These may be mounted on poles, walls, railings or bollards. *Decorative or low-level lighting* is normally placed to light up buildings, fountains, sculpture, landscaped and/or special interest areas.



Figure 34. Low-level lighting

Selection of the right combination of lighting will depend on the unique character of individual Main Streets. It may be worth the expense to test several different types of lights before choosing specific styles. The influence of private lighting from store windows, for example, is difficult to assess, but can be significant.

In general four main factors should govern lighting selection:

Variety of lamp styles: Selection of appropriate lamp designs will depend on the kind of lighting required – high-, medium-, or low-level. At the same time, the design should reflect the architectural character of the downtown (eg. Victorian coach lamps will look out of place in an area of contemporary buildings). The lamps should be durable (shatter-proof or tempered glass or plexi-glass) and easily maintained (little effort required to replace light bulbs).

Variety of mountings: High-level lights may be mounted on tall posts or on the wall of a building. Wall mountings will, of course, require negotiations with private building owners. Medium-level lights may also be mounted on shorter poles and walls, or on railings and bollards. Decorative lighting is most frequently found at ground level, either as a flood-light or canopied light (see illustration). Spot lights may also be used to illuminate features of interest, as well as functional areas. Lights may be strung across the



Figures 35 & 36. Two different lamp styles: on the right, a Victorian; on the left, a sample contemporary design.

street to indicate an intersection, highlight entry to Main Street or for special events (eg., Christmas season). Note that special wiring will be required even for these seasonal lights and will have to be made available on high-masted lamp standards or buildings.

The height of buildings and the width of the street or size of area to be illuminated will influence the type of mounting. Tall poles will be suitable for high-level lighting on wide streets with reasonably tall buildings. On the other hand, the high-level wall mounted variety would be most appropriate for a narrow Main Street which has three to four storey buildings.

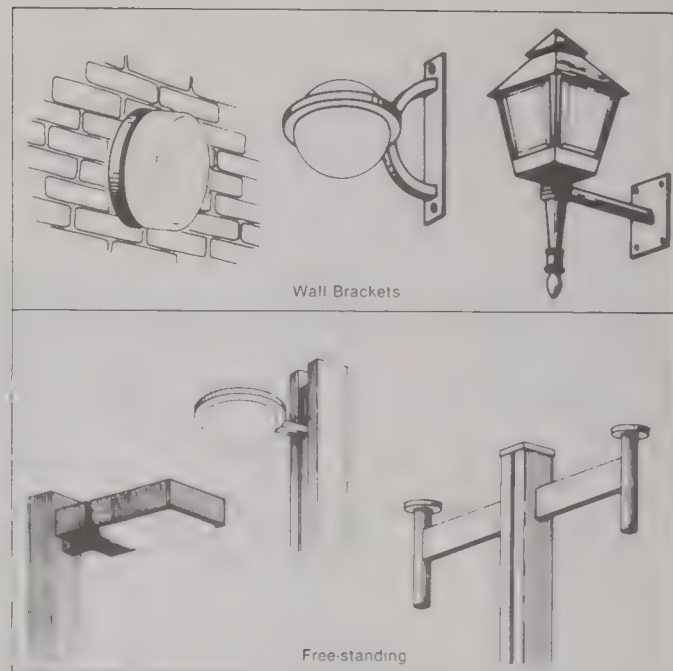


Figure 37. A variety of mountings

Variety of locations: As discussed earlier, all three kinds of lighting can be utilized in a variety of different locations: Main Street, side streets, walkways, parking lots, rest areas and malls. The lights should not block a view of an attractive building or scene and they should not clutter the sidewalk, inhibiting pedestrian traffic flow.

Coordination: Lighting should be coordinated with the placement of other articles of street furniture, with any other construction work underway and with the design theme. Lights may even be combined with other elements of street furniture to minimize clutter; for example, with signs indicating a bus stop, benches and planting.

4.3.3 Planters

Planters can be employed either independently or in combination with other types of street furniture, such as benches and litter containers.

Some of the most common problems with planters are illustrated by the photograph below. The container walls are high, with sharp edges, which may be dangerous for pedestrians. The container extends out into the sidewalk obstructing the flow of people on foot. Also people have used the planter as a place to deposit their garbage, indicating that a sufficient number of litter containers are not available where they are needed.

Good planter design incorporates a number of features:

- the container size and design will reflect the type of greenery to be planted: smaller and more delicate for flowers, larger and sturdier for shrubs;
- the construction materials will be the same as or coordinated with those of other articles of street furniture and/or the adjacent buildings;
- planters will be located so that they do not conflict with pedestrian use of the sidewalk or open space, and so that the plants can be watered and cared for easily.



Figure 38. Inappropriate use of planters.

The following considerations should also be kept in mind when deciding on what kind of planters are appropriate for downtown. First of all, to effectively accommodate mature trees, planters have to be large enough to prevent roots from freezing during winter months and to allow the root system to develop properly. In most cases, trees should be planted directly in the ground and protected with a grate or low retaining wall, planters are really unnecessary. This will allow the root system room to develop fully and also assists in tree stability.

Secondly, planters should be constructed to allow for proper watering and percolation through the soil. All above ground planters should have holes in the bottom to allow excess water to drain out.

Thirdly, planters are often used as impromptu seating. Planter design should take this into account. If seating is to be encouraged, a suitable space should be provided so that there will be no interference with plants. On the other hand, if seating is to be discouraged, the lip of the planter should be narrow.

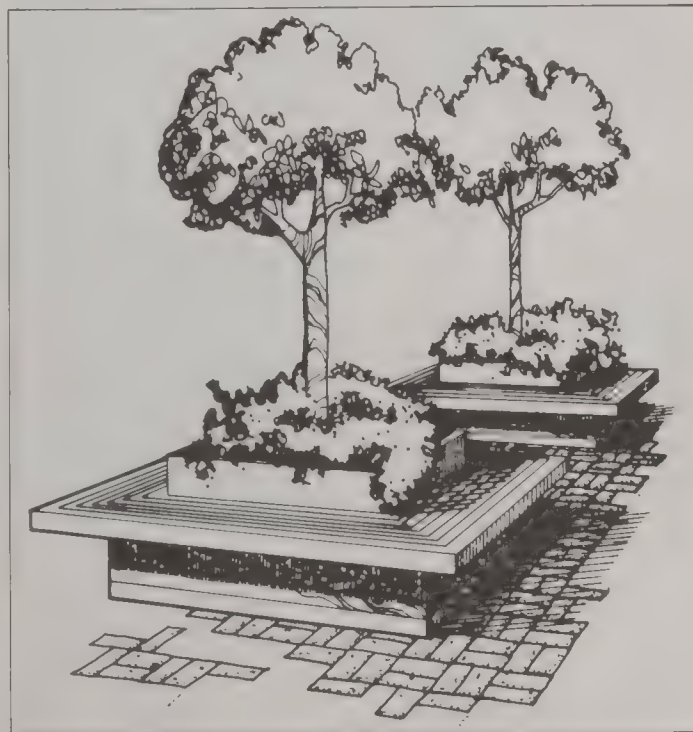
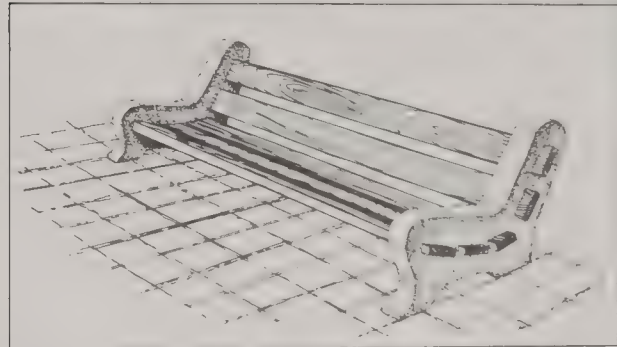
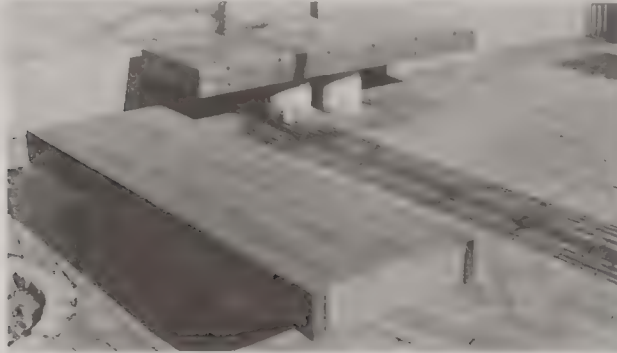


Figure 39. Planter and seating combined.

4.3.4 Benches

Benches, and seating in general, play a special role on Main Street. Not only do benches provide an opportunity to rest, to wait comfortably for a bus or a friend, but also they can encourage more social use of an area – a place to chat, to have lunch and so forth.

Comfort is an important factor in bench design – wood makes a better seating surface than concrete or brick. The finish on benches should be durable and resistant to marking (that is, graffiti). Stain or a natural finish on wood is preferable to paint.



Figures 40 & 41. Two examples of good bench design

Benches should be grouped together where possible to provide a number of seating places, as well as to designate an area for this purpose. Benches may also be combined with planters, lights and litter containers. Seating should be placed to allow privacy (planters can assist with screening here), and also to give a view of other activities – passing pedestrians or cars. A variety of seating arrangements is preferred.

The environment will also influence the location of benches and a judicious blend of sunny, shady, busy and quiet sites will afford people a choice of where they might want to sit, depending upon the weather or the time of day. Some thought should be given here to building permanent shelters (from rain, snow and wind) over some seating areas – particularly bus stops (see Pedestrian Shelters, following).

Since benches will be subject to intense and sometimes rough use, they should be sturdy and attached to the sidewalk, a wall or another surface. The manner in which they are attached is also important – metal chains or bars are probably the least effective since they can rust.

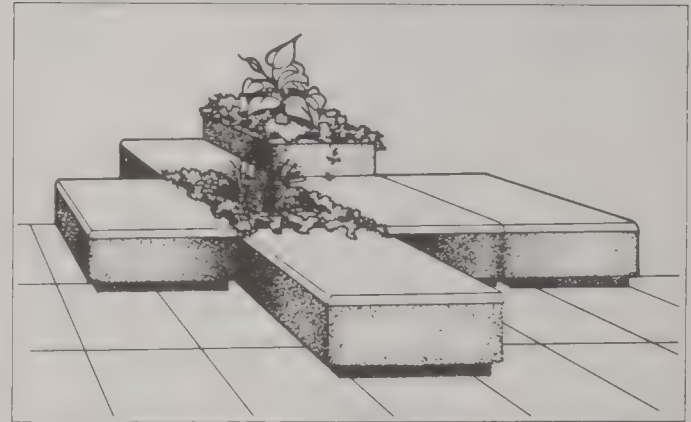


Figure 42. Bench and planter combination in concrete.

4.3.5 Litter Containers

Litter containers are essential items for Main Street. They also tend to be the most abused items – subject to vandalism if not well-maintained, or disregarded altogether if not properly sized and located.



Figures 43 & 44. Examples of impractical litter containers.

Litter containers should be situated so that they do not interfere with pedestrian movement. At the same time, they should be placed adjacent to heavy pedestrian traffic areas, rest areas, benches, restaurants, food stands and bus stops so that they are visible and convenient to use.

There are also a number of other considerations which should govern the design and positioning of litter containers. First of all, the container should have two basic parts: an outer decorative, but functional structure (such as a concrete form or brick box) and an inner basket which is easily removed, cleaned and/or replaced (plastic garbage bags perform this job admirably). The outer structure will both conceal litter from the passerby and form a coherent part of the street furniture pattern. A lid should be added to reduce the smell and minimize the number of insects attracted to the litter. A drainage hole is useful in the bottom to allow periodic flushing out of the entire container box.

Secondly, the container should be a reasonable size – not too small that it will be too easily filled or too large that it will dominate the setting and take up a lot of space.

Thirdly, the container should be fixed in place to prevent it being pushed over or blown over by the wind.

Fourthly, conventional ready-made containers (in plastic or metal) may look quite out of place on a Main Street which has custom designed furnishings. They also tend to get damaged or disfigured easily. The materials for the external container should be similar to or the same as those used for benches or planters, although the shape of the litter container should readily distinguish it from a planter.

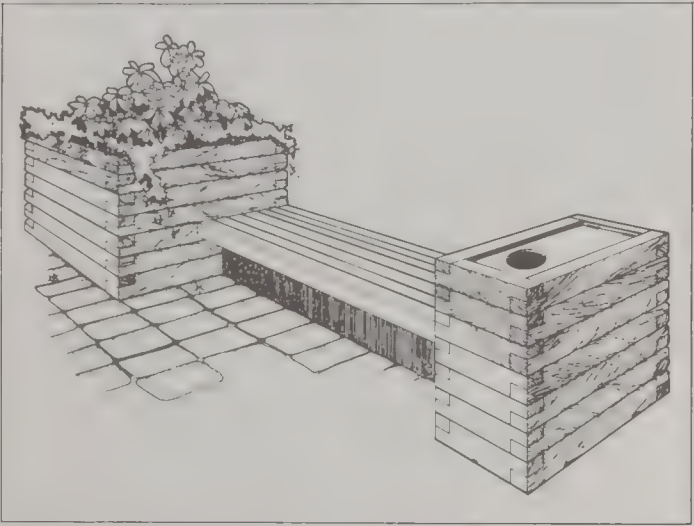


Figure 45. Well designed litter container with lid.



Figure 46. Kiosk. Very portable flower kiosk which can be closed up at night and disassembled for winter months.

4.3.6 Kiosks and Information Boards

Kiosks can be used in a number of ways and they may be permanent or temporary structures. The larger kiosk is essentially a small store or office located in a pedestrian area. Flower sellers or the local tourist office may occupy the kiosk.

The kiosk should be a decorative, as well as a useful piece of street furniture (see Figure 46). The size and design will depend upon its purpose. However, since it will be taking up space in a pedestrian area, its size should reflect human scale – not too dominant or overwhelming. In addition, there should be sufficient space around the kiosk to allow people to gather in front of it.

A permanent kiosk has two disadvantages. On the one hand, it must be built to withstand all weather which may be more expensive. On the other hand, it will seldom be used during the winter months.

Smaller kiosks can be used as information boards or advertising stands, as illustrated below. The chief consideration should be to protect the display space from rain or snow. Flat surfaces, such as a square, a hexagon or a triangle, are more useful than a cylindrical surface – both for mounting and for viewing the information.

Several small, free-standing kiosks make attractive information stands, although a number of other options are available. A board may be attached to the wall of a building or to the rear of a large kiosk selling newspapers or other goods.

Kiosks are normally constructed of wood and may be painted or stained. They provide colour and interest on Main Street, and the choice of finishes should reflect that purpose.



Figure 47. A public information board.

4.3.7 Newspaper Stands

Newspaper stands, particularly the vending machine type, can be an unsightly feature of Main Street. More often than not, they are clustered together and chained to a free-standing object (a light standard or telephone pole). The boxes rust, as do the chains and the bright-coloured paint frequently peels off.

Most stands are provided by newspaper companies as part of their advertising program. Rather than incurring the expense of supplying better quality boxes, a municipality should consider two other upgrading options. One would be to construct decorative frames or boxes into which the standard vending machines would fit. This external box would complement the style and design of the other street furniture. The other method would be to provide suitably placed metal rings in the pavement to which the boxes could be attached – these would be recessed in a building entranceway or alcove to make the boxes less visible.



Figure 48. Typical clutter of newspaper vending machines

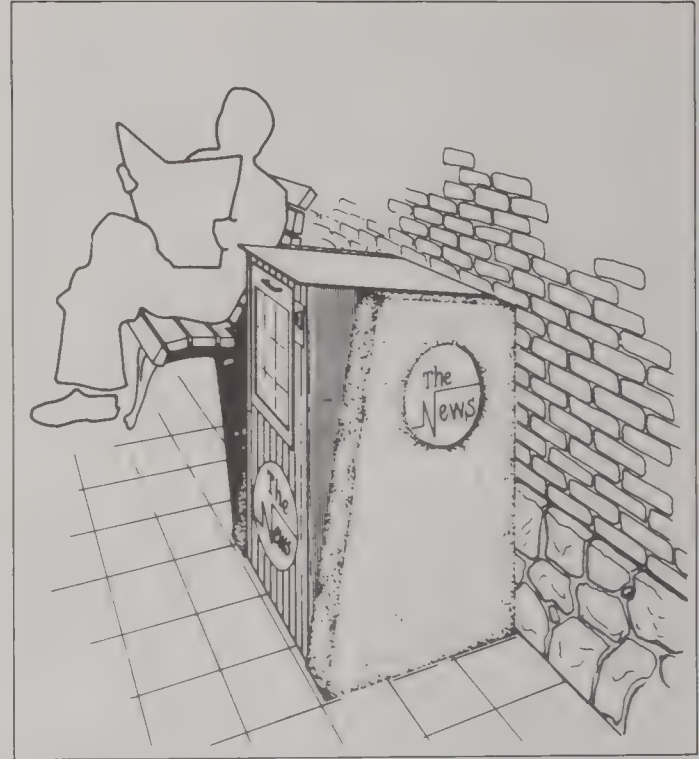


Figure 49. A vending machine container masks the commercial box and becomes a coordinated part of the streetscape

4.3.8 Water Features and Drinking Fountains

Fountains and pools can be very pleasant features in the urban scene. As natural decorative features they make an excellent change from shrubs and trees, and can be used to mask background traffic noise. Lights and/or sculpture can provide an additional complimentary aspect to fountain or pool design.

Nevertheless, the installation and operation of water features can be expensive. They require a special setting (a civic square, park) and special plumbing equipment. Fountains, in particular, need to be sited where wind will not direct spray onto passers-by. Furthermore, in a northern environment, water features cannot be operated on a year-round basis. In some cases, though, they may be used as skating rinks during the winter months.

Drinking fountains have many similar problems to other water features. They can be expensive to install and cannot be used during winter months. They do, however, provide a service to downtown pedestrians.

Drinking fountains would be most appropriately located off Main Street – out of the main traffic flow in a parkette, rest area or mall. The structures should be simple, sturdy and constructed so that children as well as adults can reach the water.

Maintenance is another concern with drinking fountains. They must be frequently cleaned and kept free of any obstructions.



Figure 50. Water features

4.3.9 Bollards

Bollards have a very simple purpose. They are primarily used to prevent vehicles from entering pedestrian zones.

Bollards may be constructed of metal, wood or concrete, and should complement the materials used for other articles of street furniture. In certain cases, where vehicular access will be required from time to time, bollards should be installed so that they can be effortlessly removed.

Of course, planters and other articles of street furniture can be employed to prevent vehicular access to an area. Bollards, however, have the advantage of small size and the fact that they do not obstruct pedestrian traffic.

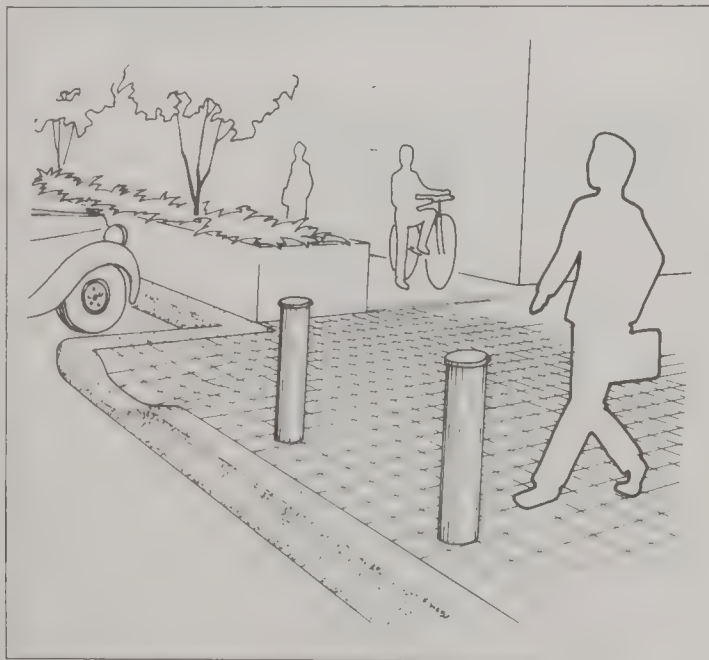


Figure 51. Bollards

4.3.10 Bike Racks

Bicycles are not an uncommon mode of transportation to Main Street. But, if proper facilities for parking bicycles are not provided, they can clutter the sidewalk and be hazardous for pedestrians.

Simplicity is the key element in bike rack design; the racks should not intrude into the urban scene. The racks only offer a place to securely lock bicycles; they need not necessarily provide support.

They can be either free-standing or part of another item of street furniture, as shown opposite. The material can be metal or the same as other street furniture (concrete or wood). It is important that the material be durable and easily maintained.

Bike racks should be distributed fairly widely in small numbers throughout the downtown. Sidewalks and parking lots can be used. However, they can be a danger for people on foot and they should be placed well out of the pedestrian pathway, but where they can be easily seen.

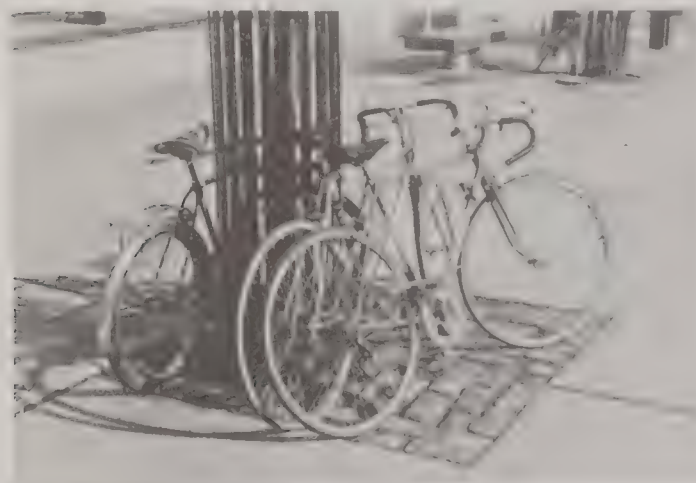


Figure 52. Tree guards used as bike racks

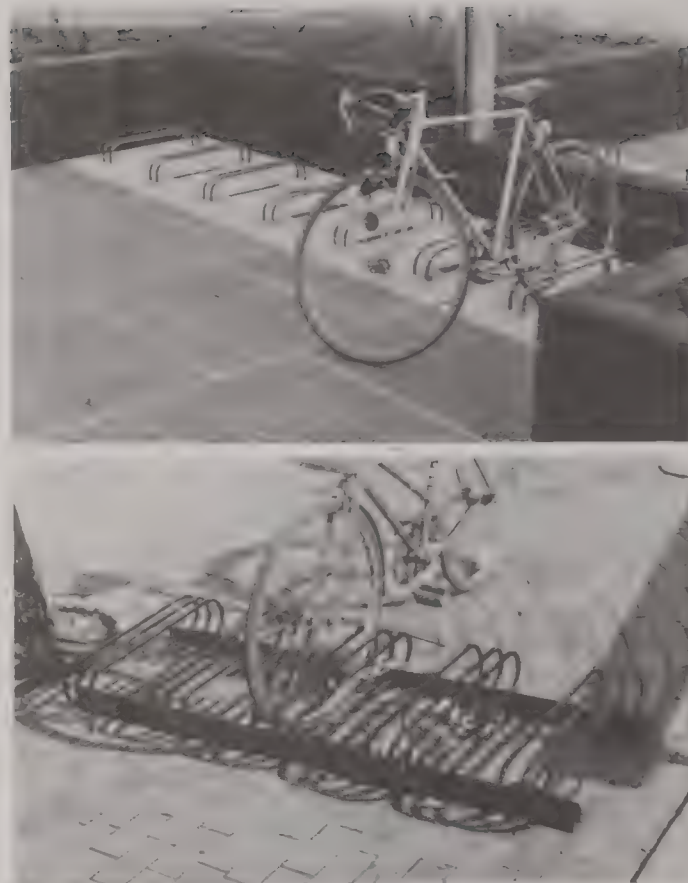


Figure 53. Two examples of simple, but functional bike rack designs

4.3.11 Signs

Signs conveying public information are a vital part of Main Street. They help identify public facilities and services (eg., parking lots, walkways, lavatories); provide directional information for those in the community and those unfamiliar with the community; and can convey an area's history, ecology and possible future development. Of course signs can also be used to identify and promote the downtown as a shopping district.

The use of signs, however, is often abused. The information may not be communicated clearly (too much writing, not legible from a distance); the signs may be poorly placed or not properly illuminated at night; there may be too many signs in one location; or not enough signs to give proper direction. The signs may obscure an interesting or historic building.

Design and placement, therefore, are a critical part of the task of preparing proper signs and deciding upon the type of information to be communicated. Key factors to consider are:

- who the readers of the signs will be: pedestrians or persons in vehicles
- pedestrian signs should be visible from the sidewalk or other places where people are on foot. The size of lettering can be fairly small and more information can be communicated because people can stop and interpret the information
- vehicular signs, in contrast, should be extremely simple, graphically clear and readily seen from moving vehicles
- similar signs, eg., those indicating pedestrian walkways or parking lots, should be standardized in printing, mounting and colour
- signs should be placed so that they do not conflict with the surrounding setting or obscure a view
- signs should not clutter the environment. Too many signs in one location will simply confuse the reader they are intended to help
- simple posts or mounting devices can be used to minimize the physical impact of signs. For example, where practical, use of an existing wall surface instead of a pole would be preferred. Several signs can be combined on one pole, rather than having a number of separate sign posts. Similarly, signs can be coordinated with other items of street furniture
- international graphic symbols are very useful, although some wording or explanation should accompany them to ensure clarity



Figure 54. Vehicular-oriented signs: Multitude of signs (top) are confusing and block view of interesting building. Below, fewer signs, well-positioned, convey the same information and preserve a pleasant vista.

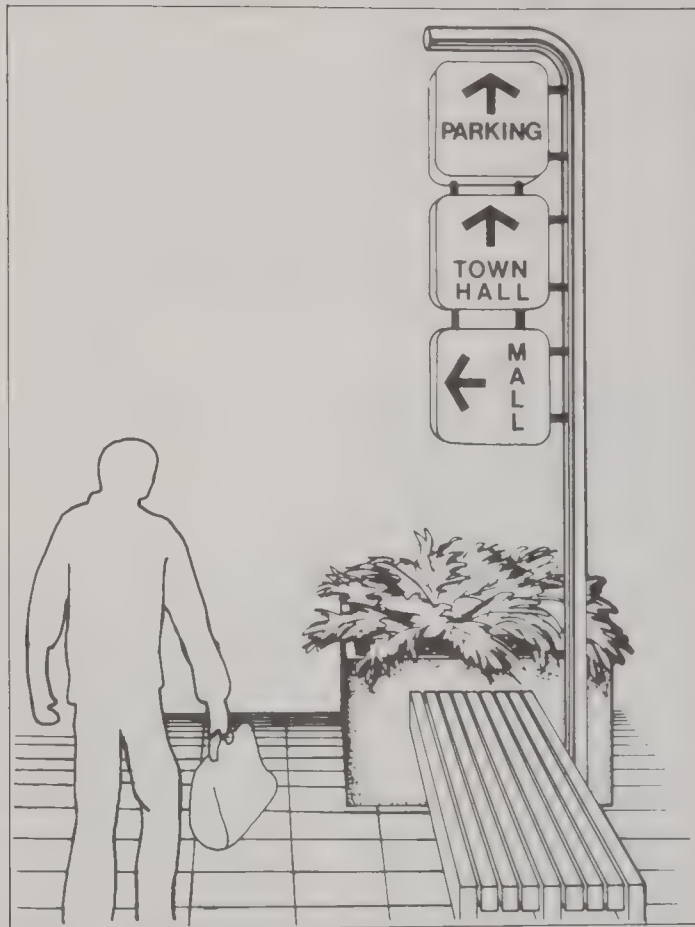


Figure 55. Pedestrian-oriented signs integrated with other articles of street furniture.

4.3.12 Pedestrian Shelters

The most common form of pedestrian shelter is the bus shelter. In smaller communities, many of which do not have public transit systems, such shelters are obviously unnecessary.

There are, nevertheless, many other uses to which pedestrian shelters can be put and many designs to choose from. The purpose of a shelter can be three-fold: first, to protect the pedestrian from wind, rain, snow or sun; second, to visually define or identify a particular space, such as an area for public meetings or concerts; and third, to beautify an area; for example, with awnings.

Broadly defined, shelters can take the form of awnings, canopies, pergolas (see below), or wood, metal, glass or plastic structures with a roof and perhaps one to three walls. They may be free-standing or attached to buildings.

A great variety of different materials are available for shelters of this type and selection of the appropriate kind of material (wood, canvas, plexi-glass, acrylic, etc.) will depend on the intended use. Sturdy practical designs should be selected and the materials should be durable enough to withstand year-round exposure.

Perhaps the major problem with pedestrian shelters of any kind is that they can become eyesores, when they dominate an area. In most cases, the shelters should blend into the surrounding environment, the exception being where they are used to emphasize special areas: entrances, intersections and so forth.

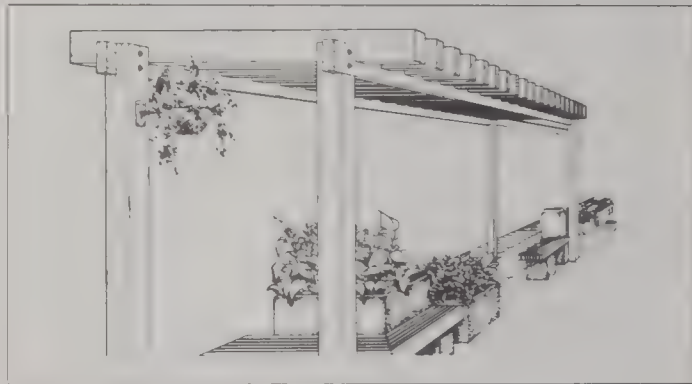


Figure 56. Pergola works well as shelter from sun.

4.3.13 Utilities

Under the broad heading of utilities, the following items are included: telephone booths, fire hydrants and lavatories. Telephone booths and fire hydrants are an accepted and necessary part of the Main Street environment. Often their distribution, location on the sidewalk and design could be significantly improved.

Telephone booths should be distributed throughout the core area, so that they are readily accessible to all users. They should not, however, be situated so that they obstruct a pleasing view or the pedestrian pathway. The design should allow the structure to blend into the surrounding area and, at the same time, offer the user privacy and shelter from the elements. The traditional booth with modifications, as shown below right, remains one of the most satisfactory designs on the market. More modern booths can be appropriate in more enclosed or smaller spaces.



Figure 57. Contemporary Telephone booth design.

Figure 58. Conventional phone booth.



The conventional red or yellow fire hydrant is one of the most frequently encountered sidewalk obstructions. It tends to add to the clutter of street furniture and is almost impossible to disguise. The new wall-mounted designs in stainless steel or aluminum are much smaller, far less gaudy, less hazardous for pedestrians, but are just as functional and probably more efficient than the traditional models. Where possible this new alternative should be considered.

Public lavatories are always controversial. However, a community should at least consider the construction of a centrally-located facility or better advertising of an existing one. Lavatories do provide a very necessary service to residents of the community, as well as to out-of-town visitors. A simple design, which can be well-lit and easily maintained, is a prerequisite.



Figure 59. Conventional Fire Hydrant

Figure 60. New concealed hydrants mounted on buildings and out of pedestrian pathway



Street Furniture Costs

	\$Range	\$Typical Costs
Traffic/pedestrian sign	500-1500	700
Street lamp	500-2000	1,500
Simple planter	100-500	300
Bench planter	300-2000	1,000
Pedestrian light	500-2000	1,200
Telephone kiosk	1000-3000	2,000
News vending machine (4 different papers)	500-2000	1,000
News vending kiosk	1,000-10,000	6,000
Poster kiosk	1000-5000	2,000
Bus shelter	1000-10,000	6,000
Bollard	50-500	200
Drinking fountain	500-700	1,000
Litter container	50-500	200
Bench	200-800	400
Bike rack	100-1000	200

Sources:

1. Macnaughton Planning Consultants Ltd., *Paris Commercial Study*, 1977
2. Ministry of Housing, *Main Street Review*, (unpublished) 1978
3. Ontario Association of Architects, *Yardstick for Costing*, 1979
4. Ministry of Culture and Recreation, *Conserving Ontario's Main Streets*, (conference proceedings), 1978
5. Ministry of Housing, *Downtown Forum*, (Conference proceedings), 1978
6. *Kirkland Lake Business Improvement Area Study*, 1978
7. Barry Lyon et al, *Yonge Street Improvement Proposals*, 1978
8. Telephone conversations with street furniture manufacturers and lighting consultants 1979.

4.4 Public Buildings and Open Space

A discussion of design guidelines for Main Street would not be complete without a look at municipally-owned buildings, such as the town hall, public library, museum or bus station; and at open spaces in the downtown. Improvements to the other aspects of Main Street should be accompanied by an up-grading and re-assessment of these facilities as well.

4.4.1 Municipal Buildings

Potential

The town hall, public library, museum or other municipal buildings offer excellent potential as focal points for Main Street. To a large extent the potential for improvement to these buildings will lie in the following areas:

- **location:** How close are they to the core area? Are they readily accessible by foot and automobile?
- **heritage value:** Do the buildings have historic or architectural merit which could be preserved and exploited in some way?
- **use:** Are all municipal services provided in the Town Hall or are they scattered throughout the community? Should some adjustment be made in the location of certain municipal offices to encourage people to come to the core?

Problems

Problems with municipal buildings often lie with their physical condition and their integration into the fabric of Main Street. On the one hand, the buildings may be poorly maintained and in need of major renovation. On the other hand, they may be cut off or isolated from Main Street, with poor pedestrian and vehicular access.

Solutions and Design Considerations

There are any number of ways municipal buildings can be improved within the context of downtown revitalization. A few of the major ways are outlined below:

Facade Treatment: Cleaning or painting. Care should be taken to ensure that, whatever method is selected, it will not harm or cause deterioration of the surface materials.

Rehabilitation: An older building, whether the town hall, the fire hall or any other public building, may be renovated with the objective of providing improved use of the building, as well as extending its economic life and value to the community.

Partial Improvement: Entrances and exits to the buildings may be up-graded with lights, signs, awnings or canopies.

Environmental Up-grading: The public areas surrounding the buildings may be cleaned up, landscaped or otherwise improved to enhance the buildings' settings and create better public gathering or rest areas.

Integration: Pedestrian walkways may be developed to better link the public facility with other downtown areas.



Figures 61 & 62. Municipal buildings can be rejuvenated quite successfully to contribute to Main Street improvements.

4.4.2 Open Space

Potential

The opportunities to create or rejuvenate open space range from the development of hard-surfaced plazas to the use of green spaces or parks in the core of the community.

From an aesthetic point of view, open spaces can provide relief, a different texture, openness and/or interruption in a built-up environment. They can allow more light and air into downtown. They can provide space for a view of a particularly striking building. From a more functional perspective, open spaces offer a place to develop rest areas, a public out-door meeting place or a play area. Furthermore, they can provide protection from the elements (sun, wind, rain), from the noise of traffic or from crowded sidewalks, if they are enclosed by the outside walls of existing buildings or by special structures.

A paved plaza area is more suitable and appropriate where there is heavy pedestrian traffic and where the size, scale and location of surrounding buildings would limit the use of greenery. Paved areas may be more easily integrated into the urban form, not disrupting the continuity among buildings and may be utilized for a wider variety of purposes, such as annual fairs, concerts, markets, sales, etc.

Green space, on the other hand, offers a definite sense of relief from the hard edges and surfaces of buildings and the street. It adds a quality of natural beauty to downtown and can enable pedestrians to move quite abruptly into a different setting.

The potential use of open spaces on Main Street has to be evaluated with several factors in mind:

Existing parks or squares: These may exist on their own or in conjunction with municipal, institutional or other public buildings. Examine them to determine whether changes are required. Are they an integral part of the core? How are they linked or connected to Main Street and what possibilities are present to improve these linkages with, for example, pedestrian walkways or by layout of the spaces.

New Open Space: New spaces may be found just about anywhere and they may be large or small: vacant lots, street corners, lane-ways, boulevards, "dead space" in the rear of buildings, a waterfront.

Problems

Problems with existing open space normally fall into three main categories:

Location: Are they situated so that access is difficult, that is

across a major roadway? Not enough space is distributed throughout downtown or there is not a satisfactory variety of spaces?

Use: Who uses the open spaces and for what purposes? Do the users actually enjoy the spaces? Are they well-maintained or littered? How does the vegetation suit the use – is it easily damaged or sturdy? Do trees provide too much shade or not enough? What condition are the paving materials in and should changes or a new type of paving stone or surface be used?

Design: Are there a variety of open spaces, green or hard-surfaced? Does the landscaping and furniture suit the needs and purpose? Is maintenance difficult and what sort of watering system is provided?

Solutions

A vast range of opportunities exists in most downtowns for the creation of new and/or the up-grading of present open spaces. Effort should be directed toward the development of a variety of spaces: employing hard surfaces, greenery, different sizes and scales. For example:

- paved square
- paved courtyard
- green corners
- parkette
- full park



Figures 63 & 64. A Civic Park on Main Street can be designed to provide a pleasant contrast to the shopping street – a place for people to rest and/or for public concerts

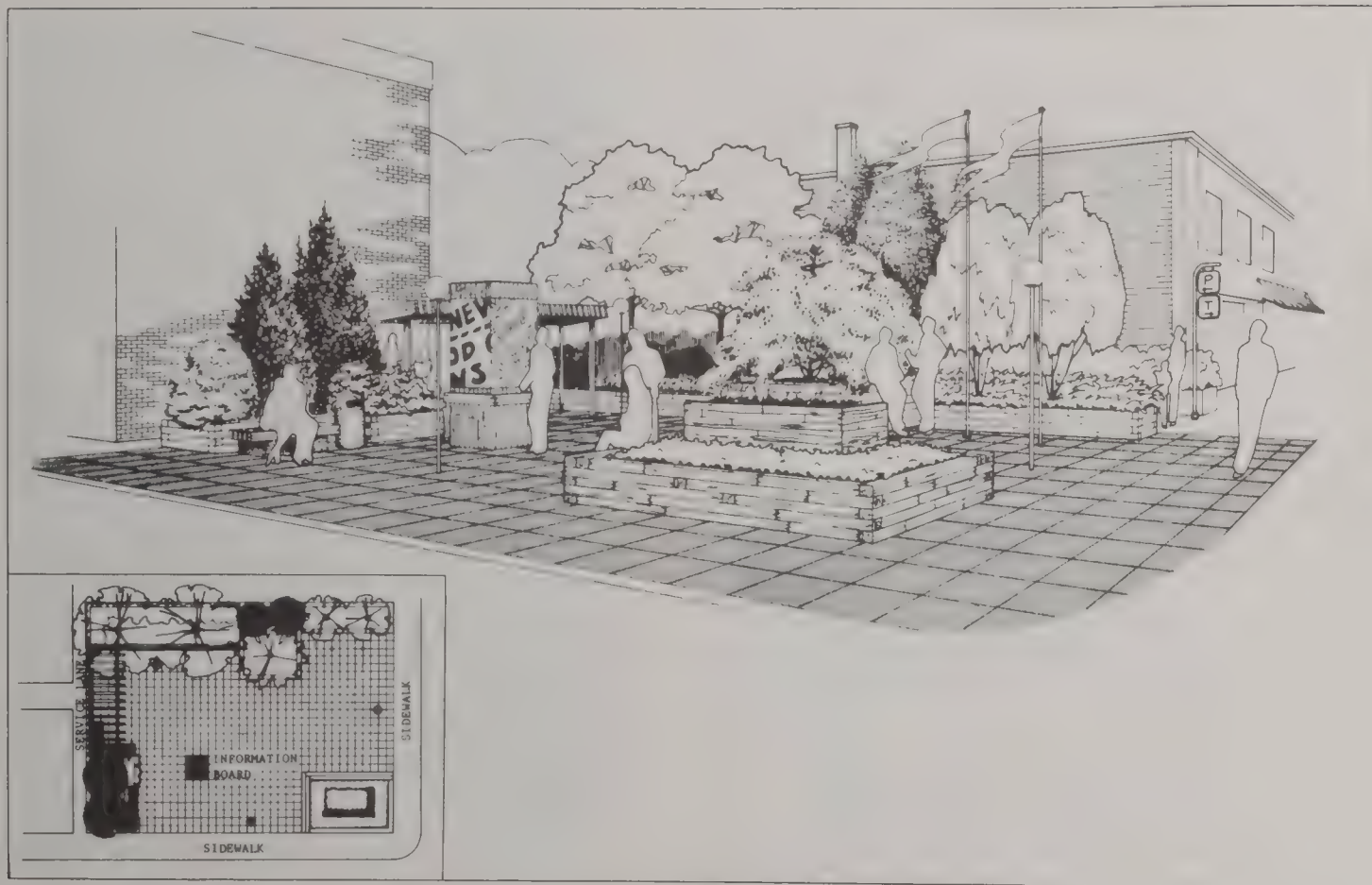


Figure 65. A street corner parkette emphasizes pedestrian amenities: information, seating, shelter. The plan inset at lower left, illustrates a design plan prepared for the parkette.

Design Considerations

The design, layout and use of materials and plants should be imaginatively and flexibly employed. A paved square or corner need not be devoid of greenery. In fact, planters and trees used wisely can enhance the attractiveness of hard-surfaced spaces. Similarly, a park can incorporate both hard and soft surfaces – some areas devoted to heavy pedestrian use, such as play areas or gathering places and others intended for more passive use, like sitting on the grass in the sun.

A street corner parkette used as a rest area will emphasize pedestrian features, such as seating, lighting, litter containers. Or a small paved courtyard between two older buildings may have a fountain, benches and cobblestones, but no greenery. Nevertheless it may be considered to be as attractive and restful as a green space.

The open space should relate to the needs of users at that particular place. A park on Main Street in front of a public building should incorporate pedestrian pathways which will lead people from the street to the building and activity areas within the park; open spaces should be connected to a pedestrian walkway system, where possible, as discussed earlier in this chapter.

The location of open space is critical to the design of the final product. The furniture, paving materials and plants should suit both the immediate natural environment, the micro-climate and the users. A paved small courtyard which receives little light should not be filled with flowering, but doomed foliage. Planters are probably inappropriate in a large park, where large trees and gardens would better suit the size and scale of the space.

One final consideration should be the influence and importance of private open spaces. The size, quality and location of these areas should be assessed when plans for public spaces are being formulated. If open to the public or highly visible they may reduce the need for new publicly owned space nearby.



Figure 66. A paved courtyard uses under-utilized small spaces to the advantage of those on foot.

A stylized graphic on a solid blue background. On the left side, a white street lamp pole extends upwards, with several thin white lines representing power or cable lines fanning out from its base. A single curved arm of the lamp extends to the right, ending in a small, rounded light fixture. The overall aesthetic is minimalist and modern.

5. beyond the main street program

5.0 Beyond The Main Street Program

The Main Street Revitalization Program makes funding available for physical improvements to public buildings and spaces. There are many other areas which are not eligible for funds under this legislation, but where a community – the BIA, private individuals and/or the municipality – can promote the improvement of downtown. For example, privately-owned building facades could be given a face-lift or a promotional newsletter on downtown events and activities could be started. Any of these activities may be initiated simultaneously with Main Street Program projects or may be carried out following completion of these works as an extension of the Program.

These other activities fall, generally, into two categories: physical improvements and BIA-related promotional and organizational efforts. Ideas for work in both areas are suggested below. The examples are by no means exhaustive, but they should illustrate the types of improvements that can be carried out to complement Main Street Program improvements.

In addition, there are numerous other resources a community can tap for assistance, both financial and technical, from within and outside of the community. These are discussed in the final section and should indicate to communities the breadth of opportunities available.

5.1 Physical Improvements

Building and Sign Improvements

- Building facades can be cleaned, repainted and repaired; windows can be repaired, repainted and replaced; air conditioners removed and awnings installed on upper floors as a decorative feature.
- Store entrances can be opened in the rear or side of buildings to offer access from parking lots or pedestrian walkways and to actually increase effective retail space.
- The side and rear walls of buildings can be cleaned, repainted or opened to provide display space for merchandise.
- Limitations can be placed on the size and extent of overhanging signs.
- The colour, lettering and design of signs can be coordinated along Main Street.
- New development or rehabilitation of existing properties can be co-ordinated with the present streetscape to ensure preservation of the scale and character of downtown.

Downtown Identity and Local Heritage

- If special features have not been developed or redeveloped fully under the Main Street program, they can be embarked upon after Main Street improvements have been made; for example, rehabilitation of historic buildings, development of the waterfront, restoration of an old fire hall.
- Run-down buildings representing historical, architectural or emotional values can be restored.

Redevelopment Opportunities: New Construction and Rehabilitation

- Attract a major retail store into the core, either a food store or department store.
- Renovate existing apartments in core (normally found on the second and third floors of Main Street buildings) to encourage downtown living.
- Use of skylights, roof terraces, greenhouses on upper floors can create new potential.
- Encourage infill development for residential purposes in core area.
- Improve and up-grade housing and the environment in areas adjacent to the core.
- Identify under-utilized and vacant land which can be developed for commercial, institutional or residential use in the core and encourage development. Most core areas offer a large amount of vacant space right in the back of buildings. This space can also be used for pedestrian malls or walkways, parks, store extensions, parking and so on.
- Promote multiple-use development projects in the core, where residential and commercial space may be combined or commercial and public facilities could be constructed together (offices and a library or art gallery).
- Encourage the construction of senior citizens housing downtown, where residents will be close to the facilities and services they need.
- Expand existing buildings by adding new floors or constructing an extension (where feasible) to maximize the use of land.
- Provide opportunities for new, or an extension of existing, core uses, eg., government offices, library, downtown hotel, museum, banquet hall, theatre, concert hall, market, or boutiques.
- Prepare public or joint public-private land assemblies for new downtown development.
- Demolish or remove run-down, noxious and non-conforming uses where feasible, to free space for appropriate development.

Highway and Street Improvements

- Close unnecessary streets or rights-of-way to allow the extension or incorporation of existing or new development into the core.
- Divert heavy traffic, especially trucks, from Main Street where possible.
- Centralize taxi stands, loading zones.
- Provide good public transit (in communities which have public transportation systems) for shoppers and others coming to the core as an alternative to the car. This may involve installation of new services, re-routing, re-scheduling, special fares, mini-buses or bus lanes on Main Street.
- Correct internal core circulation system and where appropriate make adjustments to surrounding street network.

Protective Measures

- Identify special problems, including flooding, vandalism, and the necessary measures to deal with these concerns.
- Improve police supervision and public education programs to prevent crime and vandalism.

5.2 BIA Promotions and Activities

The following represent some of the promotions and activities that can be undertaken by the BIA. Such activities not only promote the shopping district, but can create a pleasant atmosphere for both shoppers and nearby residents.

Public Relations and Community Services

- Involvement of the community in planning and implementing the improvements
- Street dances, social gatherings, public meetings
- Outdoor displays and exhibitions (eg. antiques, automobile displays)
- Arts and crafts sales and displays
- Programs for senior citizens
- Sidewalk sales
- Summer pedestrian malls
- Support for local charities and organizations (Blood Donor Clinics, United Appeal, etc.)
- Reduce vandalism by establishing recreational areas for neighbourhood children
- Sponsor local athletic teams
- Support sports events
- Day-care facilities to assist mothers while shopping in the area
- Sponsor the recreational use of parking areas during non-business hours

- Free parking for shoppers, or parking coupons (i.e. Park and Shop Validation Program)
- Victoria Day and Canada Day community fireworks
- Santa Claus parade

Publicity

- Public promotion and information to stimulate participation, activity, efficiency and awareness
- Advertising through various media (i.e. newsletter and circulars to promote area)
- Information displays
- Promotion of various pilot projects for both design ideas and community action (street furniture built at local school, marketing promotion for BIA itself)
- Promotion of better image for downtown
- Seasonal and special events promotions and advertising
- Develop 'catchy' logo to use in promotions

Merchandising and Business Activities

- Cooperative promotion by Main Street businesses
- Internal communications - dissemination of information amongst members
- Coordinating of sales and services policies
- Improvement of store security
- Control of vandalism, increase public reaction and proper measures
- Encouragement of better quality window displays (increase general awareness, competitions, by-laws and so on)
- Improve interior store layouts
- Development of better garbage collection system (that is diversion of garbage disposal and removal from mainstreet to back and/or central disposal, in special containers designed into landscaping or building structure)

Management and Maintenance

- Develop a management committee to carry out BIA activities and devise a suitable on-going program
- Provide maintenance standards for the cleaning and repair of Main Street furniture and areas
- Develop guidelines for facade improvement of private properties, as well as a list of recommended suppliers and contractors

5.3 Other Resources and Programs

Municipalities have many resources they can draw on within their own community or area. For example, the local horticultural society may be willing to offer both expertise in landscaping Main Street and voluntary labour for planting and maintaining certain displays. Similarly, as part of the school program, students may be able to build articles of street furniture. Various regional and provincial associations also offer advice in key areas, e.g., The Shade Tree Council or the Ontario Parks Association, on where to find, how to plant and what to plant in your community. The municipality should identify these sources at the outset and involve them in the preparation of the Main Street improvement plan.

To assist municipalities engaged in or considering Main Street improvements, there are also a number of Provincial and Federal programs available. Municipalities which have applied, or are thinking of applying, for Main Street funds may wish to examine the programs outlined below to determine their eligibility for additional financial and technical assistance. Communities should also consider the most practical method of combining these programs with Main Street funding to meet their particular needs. Not all programs complement one another and municipalities should discuss any proposed combination with the appropriate administrative bodies before selecting a specific course of action.

The programs listed below represent only a limited number of current Provincial and Federal programs to provide an indication of the range of resources available for community improvement activities. In addition, municipalities should be aware of the fact that programs may change from year to year and that government officials listed with programs will have the most up-to-date information. A complete guide to all renewal related government programs is prepared annually by the Ministry of Housing's Community Renewal Branch: Community Improvement Resource Kit, and may be obtained from that Branch on request.

5.3.1 Capital Works or Improvements Assistance

(a) Community Services Contribution Program

Administered by:

Ministry of the Environment
Ministry of Housing

Purpose:

A program whereby the Province of Ontario with the financial assistance of the Federal Government assists a municipality in the implementation of specific objectives relating to physical and environmental deficiencies within that municipality.

Eligible Community Services:

- planning and installation of sewage treatment trunk lines and plants in new and existing areas;
- planning and installation of community water supply facilities for new and existing areas, including trunked water supplies, as well as piped water supplies;
- planning and installation of trunk storm sewer systems, holding tanks and any treatment facilities required in new and existing areas;
- planning and installation of sewer and water site services provided for residential land development conforming to specified density criteria;
- social and cultural facilities, including day care centres, community centres and libraries;
- community recreational facilities, including community centres, senior citizens' recreation centres, neighbourhood ice rinks, parks and similar facilities;
- neighbourhood improvement and conservation, including planning for upgrading older low-income neighbourhoods, provision of open space and community facilities on a neighbourhood scale, relocation of people displaced by the provision of additional facilities, upgrading local services within the neighbourhood where these are deficient and similar items;
- non-profit housing, the municipal equity;
- upgrading and insulation of municipal buildings and community facilities;
- facilities which convert municipal waste (garbage, sludge, etc.) to energy production; and
- any municipal capital work specified in the federal-provincial operating agreement

Funding:

All eligible items will be funded in the following manner:
75% - Senior Governments Grant; 25% - Municipal Contribution.

Eligibility:

In order to qualify for the Neighbourhood Improvement Component of the Community Services Contribution Program, a municipality must meet the following criteria:

- have a neighbourhood or neighbourhoods which meet the neighbourhood eligibility criteria - where more than one area is eligible, priority must be given to the most needy;
- have an Official Plan in order to be able to designate the area pursuant to Section 22(2) of The Planning Act;
- have or agree to develop a property maintenance by-law and commit itself to effectively administer it in the future. (Section 36 of The Planning Act);
- have the financial and administrative capability to undertake the Neighbourhood Improvement Program as determined by the Province in accordance with Ontario Municipal Board rulings;
- agree to involve the residents of the neighbourhood in determining the goals and priorities for the improvement of their neighbourhood;
- must be able to produce within six months of approval a comprehensive Redevelopment Plan, which includes total project costs and could be fully implemented within a 4 year period.

Contact:

*Community Renewal Branch
Ministry of Housing
60 Bloor St. W.
8th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 3K7
Telephone (416) 965-2826*

(b) King's Highway Connecting Links Program

Administered by:

Ministry of Transportation and Communications.

Definition:

A route which connects parts of the King's Highway or an extension of King's Highway.

Assistance Towards:

- the cost of construction in cities and separated towns;
- the cost of construction and maintenance in towns, villages and townships.

Eligibility:

All Cities and Separated Towns, Towns, Villages, Townships and Counties.

Contact:

*Director, Municipal Transportation Branch
Ministry of Transportation and Communications
Downsview, Ontario
M3M 1J8
Telephone (416) 248-3621*

(c) Public Transportation:

Administered by:

Ministry of Transportation and Communications

Assistance towards:

- transit capital assistance
- the operation of a public transportation system

Eligibility:

All municipalities are eligible for the operation of a public transportation system

Contact:

As above

(d) Roads, Bridges and Culverts

Administered by:

Ministry of Transportation and Communications

Assistance towards:

The construction and maintenance of roads, bridges and culverts.

Eligibility:

- Regional, District and Metropolitan Municipalities
- Counties
- Townships
- Improvement Districts
- Villages
- Towns
- Cities and Separated Towns
- Indian Reserves

Contact:

As above

(e) Sidewalks on King's Highway or County Roads (MTC Subsidy)

Administered by:

Ministry of Transportation and Communications

Assistance towards:

Construction of sidewalks on the King's Highway or a County Road

Eligibility:

Townships

Contact:

As above

(f) Municipal Water and Sewage Facilities

Administered by:
Ministry of Environment

Assistance Towards:

Construction, alteration, renovation or extension of water supply and sewage disposal facilities operated by a municipality or on behalf of an Area Municipality or any local board thereof.

Eligibility:

Any municipality which has had major restructuring - including Metropolitan Toronto; Regional Municipalities; District Municipality of Muskoka; Cities of Thunder Bay and Timmins, and restructured Counties.

Contact:

*Project Control Section
Project Coordination Branch
Ministry of Environment
40 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 1M1
Telephone (416) 965-1647*

(g) Provincially-Owned and Ministry Financed Water and Sewage Works

Administered by:
Ministry of Environment

Assistance Towards:

The installation of water and sanitary sewage works facilities

Eligibility:

Municipalities with population below 5,000 providing the proposed facilities would meet Ministry standards.

Contact:

*Project Coordination Branch
Ministry of Environment
40 St. Clair Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario
M4V 1P5
Telephone (416) 965-7062*

(h) Sewerage Project Assistance

Administered by:
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Assistance Towards:

The construction or expansion of facilities for the treatment and disposal of sanitary sewerage; the construction of sanitary trunk collector sewers; the construction of storm sewers; the construction of storm sewers which encourage comprehensive land use

and residential development in previously undeveloped areas; development of regional sewerage plans

Eligibility:

- Provinces
- Municipalities
- Municipal Sewerage Corporations

Contact:

*CMHC
Ontario Regional Office
225 Sheppard Ave. East
Suite 222
Willowdale, Ontario
M2J 1W7
Telephone (416) 498-7300*

5.3.2 Technical Assistance

(a) Municipal Housing Statements

Administered by:
Ministry of Housing

Purpose:

The Ministry of Housing makes available study grants or staff technical assistance to help in the preparation of municipal housing statements outlining the municipality's housing needs.

Municipal Housing Statements help achieve the following Ministry objectives:

- to encourage municipal councils to formulate housing policies which could be utilized in the preparation or amendment of Official Plans
- to encourage municipalities to take an active role in the field of housing
- to consolidate municipal intents with respect to various Federal and Provincial housing programs.

Study Grants:

Contact:

*Policy Program Development Secretariat
Ministry of Housing, Toronto
56 Wellesley St. W.
Toronto, Ontario*

Technical Assistance:

Application for Ministry technical assistance in municipalities with populations of less than 10,000 which want the Ministry to conduct studies.

Contact:

*Ministry of Housing
Market Survey Section
Community Development Wing
101 Bloor St. W.
13th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M5S 1P8*

Eligibility:

- Regional Municipalities (including area municipality)
- Restructured counties
- Any other municipalities

Funding:

While each proposal will be considered on its merits maximum grant levels have been established according to municipal size:

regional municipalities	\$30,000
municipalities over 100,000	20,000
municipalities between 50,000 — 100,000	15,000
municipalities between 30,000 — 50,000	10,000
municipalities between 10,000 — 30,000	7,500

(b) Community Planning Study Grants

Administered by:

Ministry of Housing, Community Planning Advisory Branch

Purpose:

To encourage their active participation in Ontario's housing and related planning programs, the province provides planning study grants to small and rural municipalities which have little or no planning staff and limited financial resources

Description:

- This program is designed primarily to assist small municipalities (15,000 population or less) to prepare or update official plans and zoning by-laws to bring them up to an acceptable level. This would also include major revisions to official plans (including secondary plans) and zoning by-laws.
- High priority for funding is available to all municipalities for the preparation of zoning by-laws to replace minister's zoning orders
- Grants may be made available to finance planning programs for an unorganized territory
- Funds may be provided to bring municipal official plans and zoning by-laws into conformity with regional official plans and provincial policies

- In some small municipalities not contained in a defined planning area, grants will be made available for the preparation of a background study
- Where official plans already exist but are found to be deficient in some respects, grants may also be made available for certain types of special studies that would address these deficiencies
- Grants may be made to municipalities without official plans to undertake special studies that in themselves may create an incentive for a municipality to become involved in a formal planning program
- Funding will also be provided to municipalities up to 60,000 in population to assist in the preparation of official plan amendments specifically related to the core area

Contact:

*Director, Community Planning Advisory Branch
Ministry of Housing
60 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
Telephone (416) 965-3353
(or) Regional Office*

(c) Municipal Transportation Planning

Administered by:

Ministry of Transportation and Communications

Assistance Towards:

Studies for the development and improvement of transportation systems (including all modes of transporting people and goods)

Eligibility:

- Regional Municipalities
- Cities
- Towns
- Townships
- Counties
- Separated Towns
- Villages

Contact:

*Systems Planning Branch
Ministry of Transportation & Communications
Downsview, Ontario
M3M 1J8
(416) 248-3795*

(d) Main Street — General Design and Planning Assistance

Carried out by:

*Project Planning Branch
Ministry of Housing*

Purpose:

To provide technical assistance on community planning and urban design matters related to Main Street improvements. Advice and guidance will be provided to municipalities once they have prepared and submitted a plan to the Ministry

Contact:

*Director, Community Renewal Branch
Ministry of Housing
60 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M6R 1M4
(416) 965-2826*

5.3.3 Housing**(a) The Site Clearance Program****Administered by:**

Ministry of Housing

Purpose:

The Program is not applicable within Neighbourhood Improvement Program areas; however, funding for such projects is not separate from the total Federal NIP allocations.

Funds under this program are to be used for the purpose of acquiring and demolishing:

- a) Lands and residential buildings outside of NIP areas that do not meet the minimum housing standards set out in the agreement, and
- b) Lands and buildings, other than residential buildings, that are outside NIP areas and that are:
 - i) located in an area that contains housing that is occupied mainly by individuals or families of low income, and
 - ii) being used for the purpose that is inconsistent with the general character of the area in which the buildings are located, where the lands will be used, after their acquisition and clearance, for housing or recreation or social facilities.

Funding and Eligibility:

The total sum of acquisition and demolition costs of contiguous properties cannot exceed \$500,000. This measure has been instituted to prevent a disruption of existing areas by large scale clearance.

(b) Ontario Home Renewal Program**Administered by:**

Ministry of Housing

Purpose:

To extend the useful life of dwellings by providing financial assistance to homeowners.

Eligible Repairs:

- faulty structural and sanitary systems
- plumbing, heating and electrical systems
- insulation
- exterior painting and finishing

Eligibility:

- Municipalities which have adopted minimum standards
- Homeowners in unorganized areas

Funding:

OHRP provides per capita grants for municipalities to administer directly as loans and/or grants of up to \$7,500 to owner occupants whose adjusted family income is no greater than \$12,500.

Contact:

*Director, Community Renewal Branch
Ministry of Housing
60 Bloor St. W.
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-2826*

(c) Senior Citizen Housing (Geared-to-Income)**Administered by:**

Community Housing Branch
Ministry of Housing through Ontario Housing Corp'n.

Purpose:

To provide adequate rental housing for senior citizens at rents related to individual incomes.

Contact:

*Community Housing Branch
Ministry of Housing
101 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-0255*

(d) Home for the Aged - Acquisition or Alteration of an Acquired Building

Administered by:

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Assistance Towards:

The capital cost of:

- Acquiring a building for use as a home
- Altering, furnishing and equipping an acquired building

Contact:

As above

(e) Homes for the Aged - Building or Extending

Administered by:

Ministry of Community and Social Services

Assistance Towards:

The capital cost of:

- Erecting a new building
- Alteration of a building by an addition, extension or otherwise (Equipment and furnishings are included)

Contact:

As above

5.3.4 Community Facilities

(a) Community Recreation Centres

Administered by:

Ministry of Culture and Recreation

Assistance Towards:

The erection, alteration, extension, acquisition by purchase, lease or otherwise, or the renovation of a community recreation centre. Community recreation centres include:

- 1) Community Hall
- 2) Outdoor playing field for multiple activities
- 3) Regular size tennis courts and amenities as approved by Minister
- 4) Indoor and outdoor swimming pool
- 5) Snow skiing facility - (not cross country ski trails)
- 6) Outdoor or indoor skating arena suitable for use by the community public
- 7) Fun fitness trails and facilities
- 8) Gymnasium
- 9) Cultural centre - to include an auditorium, art gallery, facilities for performance of visual and creative arts.

Eligibility:

Any municipality

Funding:

25% up to \$75,000 per facility, whichever is lesser of approved costs

Contact:

*Executive Officer
Community Centres
Ministry of Culture and Recreation
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-5399*

(b) Capital Grants for Cultural Facilities

Administered by:

Ministry of Culture and Recreation, Regional Field Services Branch

Assistance Towards:

The construction or renovation of facilities to be used for the performing or visual arts, or the cost of the design fees or feasibility studies for the provision of such facilities.

Eligibility:

Non-profit art organizations
Municipalities

Contact:

*Regional Field Services Branch
Ministry of Culture and Recreation
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-0617*

(c) Museums - Establishment

Administered by:

Heritage Administration Branch, Ministry of Culture and Recreation

Assistance Towards:

Cost of land, or construction, acquisition, alteration or renovation of buildings, architect fees, land surveys and soil tests, as well as equipment furnishings and displays including installation, with respect to a new museum.

Eligibility:

- 1) Non-profit Corporation
- 2) Municipal Museum Board of Management
- 3) Public Library Board
- 4) Conservation Authority
- 5) Council of an Indian Band

Funding:

The lesser of \$5,000 or 50% of the approved project.

Contact:

*Director, Heritage Administration Division
Ministry of Culture and Recreation
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-4021*

(d) Museums - Development**Administered by:**

Heritage Administration Branch, Ministry of Culture and Recreation

Assistance Towards:

The acquisition, construction, alteration or extension of buildings, and the construction and development of a display program for existing museums. Applies only to museums that are presently receiving the Annual Maintenance Grants.

Eligibility:

See above

Funding:

See above

Contact:

See above

(e) Wintario Non-capital Grants Program**Administered by:**

Ministry of Culture and Recreation

Interests:

The Wintario Lottery was established to provide funds for culture, recreation, sports and fitness in Ontario, in addition to, and distinct from, the normal support provided by MCR and other government bodies.

The Wintario Grants Program is designed to encourage community groups to design activities in the above area which are relevant to and supported by, their communities.

Grant Information:

Non-profit community organizations, municipalities, Indian Bands and public library boards are, therefore, invited to consider applying for a Wintario Grant for special projects which promote the development of the arts, sports, fitness, recreation, multi-culturalism, heritage conservation and public libraries.

As funding is designed for special projects which are above and beyond the normal activities of the applicant, Wintario will not provide assistance to defray the operating costs of an organization or an on-going program.

All projects funded by Wintario must be of community wide benefit.

Contact:

*The Wintario Grants Information Office
77 Bloor Street West
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9*

(f) Wintario Capital Grants Program**Administered by:**

Ministry of Culture and Recreation

Purpose:

Includes such projects as the purchase, construction or renovation of cultural and recreational facilities and the purchase and installation of fixed equipment is frozen for an indefinite period of time. Unable, however, to accept applications for capital projects until further notice, with the following exceptions;

a) Wintario will provide up to 50% of the cost of developing need studies, feasibility studies and master plans;

b) Wintario will assist with the repair or replacement of any eligible cultural or recreational facility which has collapsed or has been closed. Only facilities which were operational prior to collapse or closure will be considered.

Contact:

As above

(g) Ontario Heritage Foundation (For full details see Appendix D)**Administered by:**

Ministry of Culture and Recreation

Assistance Towards:

The preservation and restoration of historic or architecturally significant buildings. Archaeological investigations.

Eligibility:

Municipalities
Organizations
Individuals

(h) Community Health Facilities**Administered by:**

Ministry of Health

Assistance Towards:

The acquisition of new facilities, the alteration of, addition or renovation to existing community health facilities, or parts thereof that have become obsolete or inadequate (land costs are excluded).

Eligibility:
Local Boards of Health
Municipal Corporations
Non-profit organizations

Contact: *Community Health Division
Ministry of Health
15 Overlea Blvd.
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-2426*

(i) Elderly Persons Centres - Capital Grants

Administered by:
Ministry of Community and Social Services

Assistance Towards:
The cost of the erection, alteration, extension or acquisition, or the furnishing and equipping of a building or premises for use as a social, recreational drop-in, or day care centre for elderly persons, including the cost of land, furnishings and equipment.

Eligibility:
Municipalities
Non-profit corporations may qualify conditionally upon a municipal 20% grant

Contact: *Director, Senior Citizens Branch
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Hepburn Block
80 Grosvenor Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 1E9
(416) 965-5103*

(j) Elderly Persons Centres - Operating and Special Program Grants

Administered by:
Ministry of Community and Social Services

Assistance Towards:
The cost of maintaining and operating social services, drop-in, or day-care centres for elderly persons
Special grants for programs or services for elderly persons carried out by approved centres.

Eligibility:
Municipalities

Contact:
As above

5.3.5. Administration

(a) Canada Works Program

Administered by:
Department of Manpower and Immigration

Assistance Towards:
The Canada Works Program is designed to utilize the expertise of local organizations in the development and management of projects that will create new short term employment opportunities. The objective of the Program is to get needed work done and public benefits produced by people whose energies and talents are temporarily surplus to private sector needs. The jobs created by the projects should also be designed to provide project participants with work experience that will assist them in securing other employment after their participation on the project.

Contact: *(Local Offices)
Job Creation Branch
Canada Manpower Centre*

(b) Involvement in Municipal Administration

Administered by:
Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs

Assistance Towards:
Training of students of municipal administration and planning in local government.

Eligibility:
All municipalities, including municipal planning Boards

Contact: *Subsidies Branch
Ministry of Intergovernmental Affairs
56 Wellesley St. W.
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R8
(416) 965-2204*

(c) Small Business Management Development Program

Administered by:
Ministry of Industry and Tourism

Purpose:
Locally owned and managed retail and service businesses in Northern and Eastern Ontario communities may qualify for a Management Development Program designed to help improve their operations and profits.

The program is intended to provide up to 25 established local businesses in a selected community with up-to-date techniques of business management.

Private sector consultants are selected by ministry staff in a competitive bidding process to assist business owners in a confidential, one-to-one basis, by analysing the business operation, recommending changes and assisting in implementation of same. The consultant team will return in 2 to 3 months to review progress made in each business and to evaluate the program on an aggregate community basis.

Contact:

*Small Business Operations Division
Ministry of Industry and Tourism
Hearst Block, 6th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
(416) 965-3405
or Regional Offices*

(d) Small Business Assistance Program

Administered by:

Ministry of Industry and Tourism

Purpose:

Low cost management consulting services for small business is available through the Small Business Assistance Program. The Ministry in cooperation with 12 Ontario universities, has undertaken this program with university business administration students to supply counselling services to small businesses.

Counselling by the students covers such areas as cash management and financial planning, book-keeping systems, production scheduling and cost control, marketing and marketing research, distribution and promotion. The SBA program offers business counselling at a very low cost in areas essential for the success of small business. Any Canadian manufacturing, retail, service or tourism business that can be conveniently reached by 1 of the 12 schools and not in a position to engage a professional consulting service is eligible for assistance.

Contact:

As above

(e) CASE - Counselling Assistance to Small Enterprises

Administered by:

Federal Business Development Bank

Purpose:

Assist small businesses in Canada to improve their methods of doing business

Funding:

This service is provided at a nominal fee and it supplements counselling services obtainable from the private sector. It makes available the experience of retired business persons as counsellors.

Eligibility:

Any proprietorship, partnership or limited company conducting virtually any type of business enterprise in Canada can apply provided:

- the enterprise does not have more than 75 full-time employees
- the enterprise has had prior discussion of its needs with its appropriate business advisor(s).

Contact:

7 Ontario regional offices FBDB



appendices

APPENDIX A

Business Improvement Areas

In 1970 Ontario enacted section 361 of the Municipal Act providing local business and retail communities with the necessary legislation to upgrade their commercial districts.

The Business Improvement Area (BIA) concept is a self-help mechanism for the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally-owned lands, buildings and structures beyond the normal or routine works of the municipality and for the promotion of the area as a business or shopping area.

This approach is often called the local business-person's legislation since a BIA can only be established on the initiative of the local business community. It is funded by the local group and managed by a board of management whose majority is chosen from among the local group.

As the first step towards a BIA, the business association or chamber of commerce must approach the local municipality requesting the designation of such an area. The association's request must be submitted to the municipal clerk. The clerk will then notify, in writing, every person using land for, or in connection with, a business in the proposed area as shown on the latest assessment roles.

Those within the proposed area who may object have a sixty day period in which to present a petition opposing the BIA designation. The petition must be properly addressed to the municipal clerk who then must decide if the petition is sufficient.

Two conditions determine sufficiency:

1. Does the petition represent objections by one-third of all those notified?
2. Is the realty assessment of the lands held by the objectors equal to one-third of the realty assessment of all businesses within the proposed area?

If these two conditions are met, no application can be considered for a period of less than two years. If the petition is insufficient, municipal council may then pass the bylaw establishing the BIA and then forward it to the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB). If no valid objections are received, the OMB may approve the bylaw, and, council may then appoint a board of management.

Board of Management

The board of management is a corporate body and must have at least one member who is also a member of the local council.

Each member of the board may hold office for the term of local council and must be qualified to be elected as a member of council. If a vacancy occurs, council will appoint a successor who will serve

out the term of the replaced member.

The board of management is responsible for the current year budget which outlines a program of improvement and promotion for the designated BIA. Council may approve this budget and once approval has been given, the municipal treasurer may pay out funds to the board. The board however, may only spend money approved within the budget and cannot incur any debts beyond the current year.

The board will submit an audited financial statement to council by March 1 each year, and its books and accounts will always be open to inspection by the municipal auditor.

If the bylaw appointing a board is repealed, all of its undertakings and assets will be assumed by the municipality. Monies required by the budget will be recovered from business persons in the area listed on a separate business tax roll. The same steps apply to the recovery of non-payment of the levy as applied to ordinary taxes.

Any bylaw establishing a BIA may be repealed, but the repeal may not take effect until December 31 in the year in which it is passed.

The board of management must serve the entire BIA and, therefore, it should be representative of the total area. The involvement of every segment of the BIA is most desirable, eg., representatives of the retail, professional, service and financial communities should be on the board.

These members, together with the council representatives, form the board of management. Although official elections for the board cannot be held, a selection meeting can be convened by the BIA membership. A slate of candidates can then be recommended to council for appointment to the board.

After the board has been appointed by the municipality the members elect a chairman, vice chairman and a secretary-treasurer.

The board of management has the authority to determine what does and does not become part of the improvement and promotional program, set priorities and a budget, and apportion funds. The board also sets the policy of the association on a multitude of matters.

As of January 30, 1980, there were 127 active business improvement areas across Ontario.

For more information contact:

Ministry of Housing
Community Renewal Branch
60 Bloor St. West
8th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M4W 3K7
(416) 965-2826

APPENDIX B

Communities Under 30,000 with BIA's**20 - 30,000 population**

Brockville	20,010
Fort Erie	23,808
Milton	22,706
Newmarket	25,133
Orillia	23,575
Owen Sound	19,697
St. Thomas	27,059
Stratford	26,515
Woodstock	26,020

10 - 19,999 population

Cobourg	11,216
Collingwood	11,465
Delhi	14,931
Dundas	19,129
Grimsby	15,265
Kirkland Lake	12,768
Leamington	11,404
Lincoln	
(Beamsville)	14,458
Lindsay	13,687
Midland	11,726
Orangeville	13,034
Pembroke	14,353
Port Colborne	19,784
Simcoe	14,093
Trenton	14,784
Wallaceburg	11,143

2,000 - 9,999 population

Alliston	4,675
Amherstburg	5,590
Bradford	6,610
Brighton	3,070
Campbellford	3,411
Carleton Place	5,574
Dryden	6,482
Exeter	3,532
Essex	6,259
Forest	2,679
Fort Frances	9,088
Goderich	7,298
Hanover	5,786
Hearst	5,212
Kenora	9,992
Napanee	4,848
New Liskeard	5,496
Paris	7,048
Parry Sound	5,248
Penetang	5,388
Petrolia	4,315
Pictou	4,324
Port Hope	9,992
Strathroy	8,286

Others

Streetsville, Port Credit & Clarkson (Mississauga)
Acton & Georgetown (Halton Hills)
Preston (Cambridge)
Bowmanville (Newcastle)

APPENDIX C

Selected References:

A.E. LePage, Research and Planning Division, *Windsor, Ontario: Downtown Market Study*, April, 1979

A.J. Dramond Planners Ltd., *Town of Dundas: Core Area Study*, no date

Barton Myers Associates *et al*, *Five Studies: Planning for Downtown Conservation*, July 1978

Berk, Emmanuel, *Downtown Improvement Manual*, Chicago, Ill: ASPO Press, May 1976

Brook, Carruthers, Shaw Architects, *Improvements for Downtown Hanover*, Sept. 1978

City of Edmonton Planning Department, *Street Furniture II*, January 1979

Cullen, Gordon, *Concise Townscape*, New York: Van ostrand Reinhold; no date

Design Council and Royal Town Planning Institute, *Streets Ahead*, New York: Whitney Library of Design, 1979

Development Planning Associates, *Downtown Dartmouth Planning Study*, February 1978

Downtown Idea Exchange, 1977—1979

Landplan Collaborative Inc. *et al*, *Revitalizing Downtown Guelph: Improvements Manual*, 1977

Marshall Macklin Managhan Ltd., *Downtown Improvement Plan: Orangeville*, 1978

Ministry of Housing, *New Directions: Proceedings of a Symposium on Downtown Cores*, Nov. 1977

Ministry of Housing, *Business Improvement Areas: Proceedings of a Workshop on Downtown Improvements*, June 1976

Ministry of Housing, *Perth Downtown Improvements Study*, August 1979 (unpublished)

National Trust for Historic Preservation, *Main Street Project*, 1978

Ontario Heritage Foundation, *Conserving Ontario's Main Streets*, August 1978

Sheppard Burt and Associates *et al*, *St. John's Heritage Conservation Area Study*, December 1976

Urban Life Consultants, *Calgary Downtown Retail Study*, January 1978

Urban, Regional and Environmental Affairs Group, *Port Hope: Downtown and Harbourfront Study*, March 1979

Correspondence from the following municipalities:

Gloucester, Massachusetts
 Somerville, New Jersey
 Poughkeepsie, New York
 Corning, New York
 Mankati, Minnesota
 Frederick, Maryland
 Medina, Ohio
 Marshall, Michigan
 Washington, Pennsylvania

APPENDIX D

Heritage Conservation and Main Street Revitalization

Development on Main Street involves not only the promotion of cooperative business endeavours and the design and implementation of municipal improvement schemes, but also the development of design standards that would influence new construction and alterations or additions to existing buildings. Invariably many existing buildings could be called "heritage" buildings. Located in the centres of cities and towns many of these buildings date to the early years in a community's history. Often these buildings are of an architectural style of interest and built of brick or stone or wood in a manner that is not seen today. The vitality of a municipality rests in its ability to grow and change. Sometimes growth may mean the demolition and replacement of older buildings by newer structures, while at other times change may occur by adapting structures whose utility has ceased, so that they may once again serve a useful purpose. Care should be taken to ensure that the original character of these heritage buildings is not lost, and that full consideration is given to their retention.

The following presents a discussion on the question of heritage conservation and urban design.

The legislative base in Ontario: The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974

In Ontario, The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974, has established the legislative base for the protection of properties of architectural and/or historical significance. By this legislation a municipality may identify and designate properties thereby controlling alterations and delaying demolition for up to nine months. To assist it in its work Council may approve a Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee, or LACAC, to advise Council on all matters relating to designation. In Part IV of this legislation, individual properties are designated by local by-law. The Conservation Review Board has been established to review objections to designation under this part of The Ontario Heritage Act. In Part V, a municipality may by by-law define an area for study as a Heritage Conservation District. To do so, enabling policies must be in place in the municipal Official Plan. The study could suggest measures of directing development and enhancing existing buildings. These measures, developed in the form of a Heritage Conservation District Plan, are implemented by a by-law designating the area as a Heritage Conservation District. The HCD Plan must be submitted to the Ministry of Culture and Recreation for endorsement. Once the plan is in place, any alterations, demolition or new construction cannot occur without permission of Council and the issuance of a permit. Thus Council can not only control alterations to buildings but can also direct development in a manner sympathetic to existing heritage resources.

Heritage Conservation and good urban design

The protection of heritage resources does not just involve the saving of a few buildings to be carefully restored for use as museums. Nor does it involve the identification of just those buildings that are unique, the "oldest", the "rarest" or the "best". Rather, heritage conservation involves the assessment of all buildings from the point of view of design, historical value, architectural value, utility and structural condition and the making of conscious decisions to re-use these structures and where possible incorporate them into plans for new development. Too often it appears easier to demolish and to build anew than to use what is there.

Ontario's communities have a historical built form that, it is argued, should be respected when new growth is anticipated. Thus new development should recognize existing built scale, form and materials. New places should be created that add value to the existing form and scale and provide increased amenity.

Too often existing buildings are viewed as problems, rather than opportunities. A sensitive design should recognize the inherent value of what exists and seize these as opportunities for community development.

Heritage conservation therefore has an important place in a community's urban design programme. It is hoped that by combining heritage with development the rewards will be many: heritage will be conserved and a richer environment created by the diversity of elements within it.

The Ministry of Culture and Recreation, Heritage Conservation Division — A resource group

The responsibility for the implementation of The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974, and all matters relating to the conservation of heritage resources rests with the Ministry of Culture and Recreation. Two specific groups within this Ministry, namely the Heritage Conservation Division and the Field Services Branch have the capacity to assist communities in the development of heritage conservation programmes.

Areas of possible assistance could include:

Identification and evaluation of heritage resources

Municipalities are encouraged to conduct thorough, well documented investigations to identify and evaluate heritage resources.

Official Plan Policies

MCR is prepared to work with municipalities to develop official plan policies that would provide for the conservation of heritage resources.

Preparation of Heritage Conservation District Plans

MCR has developed Guidelines on the study of HCDs and the preparation of HCD Plans and is building a body of expertise with regard to HCDs as it oversees the development of the HCD Studies. Many Plans include design guidelines for Main Street.

Financial Assistance for the Development of HCD Studies and Plans

Funds are available to assist with the study of HCDs and prepare an HCD Plan. These funds are available from the Ontario Heritage Foundation and Wintario.

Easements

The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974 and an amendment in 1979 permits the Ontario Heritage Foundation and municipalities to hold heritage easements on properties of heritage value. These easements are forms of contractual agreements between the owner of a property and the body holding the easement affecting features of a heritage property. Easements are donated, and the property title remains with the owner.

Financial Assistance for Heritage Structure Investigations

Often when a building's future is in question a number of questions need to be asked before a decision can be reached: How much will rehabilitation cost over new construction? What uses can we find for this facility? Who will manage it? Is it structurally sound for the uses proposed? These and other questions should be answered by a *heritage structure investigation*, a form of feasibility study which deals with a number of questions. The MCR has prepared guidelines for such investigations and is prepared to fund these investigations through the Ontario Heritage Foundation and Wintario.

Capital Grants for Projects of Provincial Significance

The Ontario Heritage Foundation has funding available to assist with the implementation of projects by granting funds for conservation. Projects are generally of provincial architectural/historical significance and the building must be designated under The Ontario Heritage Act, 1974.

Technical Assistance

The MCR is able in some instances to offer technical advice of restoration/conservation questions.

For information on the Ministry of Culture and Recreation contact the Field Office in your region.

Barrie

114 Worsley Street
Barrie, Ontario
L4M 1M1
Telephone: 737-3301

Belleville

280 Pinnacle Street
Suite 3
Belleville, Ontario
K8N 3B1
Telephone: 968-3474

Dryden

2nd floor, 479 Government Road
Ontario Government Building
P.O. Box 3000
Dryden, Ontario
P8N 3B3
Telephone: 223-2271

Hamilton

2nd floor, 1083 Barton Street East
Hamilton, Ontario
L8L 3E2

Hanover

427 - Tenth Street
Hanover, Ontario
N4N 1P8
Telephone: 364-1626

Kingston

Room 204, 1055 Princess Street
Kingston, Ontario
K7L 5T3
Telephone: 542-7349

London

5th floor, 495 Richmond Street
London, Ontario
N6A 5A9
Telephone: 438-2947

North Bay

2nd floor, 215 Oak Street East
North Bay, Ontario
P1B 1A2
Telephone: 474-3821

Ottawa

Rideau Trust Building
Room 1116, 11th floor
1 Nicholas Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1N 7B7
Telephone: 232-1116

Peterborough

2nd floor, 340 George Street North
Peterborough, Ontario
K9H 7E8
Telephone: 748-3711

St. Catharines

Suite 301, 71 King Street
St. Catharines, Ontario
L2R 3H7
Telephone: 688-6472

Sault Ste. Marie

3rd floor, 390 Bay Street
Elgin Tower
Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
P6A 1X2
Telephone: 942-3751

Sudbury

1760 Rent Street South
Sudbury, Ontario
P3E 3Z8
Telephone: 522-1416

Thunder Bay

1825 Arthur Street East
2nd floor
Thunder Bay, Ontario
P7E 5N7
Telephone: 475-1255

Timmins

2nd floor, 22 Wilcox Avenue
Timmins, Ontario
P4N 3K6
Telephone: 267-7117

Toronto

8th floor, 700 Bay Street
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9
Telephone: 965-0283

Waterloo

55 Erb Street East, Suite 307
Waterloo, Ontario
N2J 4K8
Telephone: 886-3520

Windsor

6th floor, 250 Windsor Avenue
Windsor, Ontario
N9A 6V9
Telephone: 256-4919

For further information on the Foundation contact:

The Ontario Heritage Foundation
77 Bloor Street West, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9
Telephone: 965-3706

For information on implementation of The Ontario Heritage Act,
1974 and for technical assistance on individual buildings, contact:

Heritage Administration Branch
77 Bloor Street West, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9
Telephone: 965-4021

For information on easements contact:

Heritage Trust
77 Bloor Street West, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9
Telephone: 965-5727

